

1992

# The Effects of Politically Biased Performance Appraisal on Ratee Job Attitudes and Desire to Respond to Feedback.

Al Charles Schnur

*Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool\\_disstheses](https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses)

---

## Recommended Citation

Schnur, Al Charles, "The Effects of Politically Biased Performance Appraisal on Ratee Job Attitudes and Desire to Respond to Feedback." (1992). *LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses*. 5356.  
[https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool\\_disstheses/5356](https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/5356)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [gradetd@lsu.edu](mailto:gradetd@lsu.edu).

## **INFORMATION TO USERS**

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

**The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.** Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.



University Microfilms International  
A Bell & Howell Information Company  
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA  
313/761-4700 800/521-0600

**Order Number 9301104**

**The effects of politically biased performance appraisal on ratee  
job attitudes and desire to respond to feedback**

**Schnur, Al Charles, Ph.D.**

**The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1992**

**U·M·I**  
300 N. Zeeb Rd.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

THE EFFECTS OF POLITICALLY BIASED PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL  
ON RATEE JOB ATTITUDES AND DESIRE TO RESPOND TO FEEDBACK

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

the Department of Psychology

by

Al C. Schnur

B.A., Kansas State University, 1986

M.A., Louisiana State University, 1988

May, 1992

### Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his gratitude to Dr. Dirk D. Steiner, committee chairman, for his support and assistance in completing this project. Thanks are also given to Drs. Jing-Lih Farh, Irving M. Lane, Lorne M. Sulsky, Robert C. Mathews, committee members, and Drs. Joseph S. Herrington, Frederick Sale Jr., Garry L. Hughes, colleagues, for their helpful suggestions.

Special thanks are given to my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Alfred C. Schnur, whose support and guidance were invaluable throughout my education. Also my fondest gratitude is expressed to Lorene M. Hook who worked nearly as hard on this endeavor as I and showed endless patience in helping me see it through to the end. Finally, thanks are due to Susan A. Kennedy for typing what I'm sure seemed like a thousand drafts of this manuscript.

## Table of Contents

	Page
Acknowledgements . . . . .	ii
Table of Contents . . . . .	iii
List of Tables . . . . .	vi
List of Figures . . . . .	vii
Abstract . . . . .	viii
Introduction . . . . .	1
Past Research in Performance Appraisal: Increasing Accuracy . . . . .	3
Recent Research in Performance Appraisal: Rater Motivation . . . . .	5
Politically Motivated Rating Behavior . . . . .	8
Managers' Rationales for inflating/Deflating Ratings . . . . .	10
Consequences of Politically Biased Feedback: A Research Gap . . . . .	14
Performance Feedback and Employee Motivation . . . . .	15
Acceptance of Feedback . . . . .	19
Feedback Source . . . . .	19
Feedback Message. . . . .	21
Equity and Fairness Perceptions in Performance Appraisal . . . . .	26
Overview of Present Study. . . . .	31
Toward a Model of Politics in Performance Appraisal . . . . .	32

Hypotheses . . . . .	34
Overview of Methodology . . . . .	39
Study 1 . . . . .	40
Method . . . . .	40
Subjects . . . . .	40
Procedure . . . . .	42
Vignettes . . . . .	43
Dependent Variables . . . . .	44
Analysis . . . . .	48
Results . . . . .	49
Manipulation Check Results . . . . .	49
Interrelationships among Variables . . . . .	51
Analysis of Variance . . . . .	51
Organization Effects . . . . .	68
Summary . . . . .	68
Interaction Effects . . . . .	69
Study 2 . . . . .	78
Subjects . . . . .	78
Procedure . . . . .	80
Instruments . . . . .	81
Analysis . . . . .	86
Results . . . . .	87
Summary . . . . .	93

Exploratory Analyses . . . . .	93
Discussion . . . . .	100
Results of Analyses of Hypothesized Relationships . . . . .	100
Exploratory Analyses . . . . .	107
Integrative Overview Study 1/Study 2	108
Limitations/Alternative Explanations of Results . . . . .	109
Applications . . . . .	112
Future Research . . . . .	115
Conclusion. . . . .	117
References . . . . .	119
Appendix A. Cover Letter: Study 1. . . . .	128
Appendix B. Vignette Instructions . . . . .	130
Appendix C. Vignettes . . . . .	132
Appendix D. Questionnaire: Study 1 . . . . .	160
Appendix E. Cover Letter: Study 2 . . . . .	164
Appendix F. Description of Political use of Performance Appraisal . . . . .	166
Appendix G. Questionnaire: Study 2 . . . . .	168
Vita . . . . .	173



## List of Tables

Table 1.	Intercorrelations among Variable . . .	52
Table 2.	ANOVA Results for Dependent Variable: Desire to Respond to Appraisal Feedback	54
Table 3.	ANOVA Results for Dependent Variable: Acceptance of Rating . . . . .	56
Table 4.	ANOVA Results for Dependent Variable: Trust in the Rater . . . . .	58
Table 5.	ANOVA Results for Dependent Variable: Trust in the Organization . . . . .	59
Table 6.	ANOVA Results for Dependent Variable: Trust in the Appraisal Process . . . .	60
Table 7.	ANOVA Results for Dependent Variable: Perceived Appraisal System Value . . .	62
Table 8.	Cell Sizes and Means for Subject Rating X Inconsistency Interactions . .	73
Table 9.	Cell Sizes and Means for Subject Rating X Co-Worker Rating X Inconsistency Interaction . . . . .	75
Table 10.	Intercorrelations among Variables . . .	88
Table 11.	Comparison of Group Means (Insurance Company versus Financial Institution) for Political Variables . . . . .	89

### List of Figures

Figure 1.	Ilgen Fisher and Taylor's (1979) Feedback Process Model . . . . .	18
Figure 2.	Tentative Model of the Effects of Politics in Performance Appraisal . .	33
Figure 3.	Subject Rating X Rating Consistency Interaction for Dependent Variable: Acceptance of Rating . . . . .	71
Figure 4.	Subject Rating X Rating Consistency Interaction for Dependent Variable: Trust in the Rater . . . . .	72
Figure 5.	Graphic Representation of the Interaction Between Organization and Co-workers' Ratings on Trust in the Appraisal Process . . . . .	76
Figure 6.	Tentative Model of the Effects of Politics in Performance Appraisal with Regression Coefficients Added . . . .	97

### Abstract

The present study examined the relationships of politics in appraisal and political use of appraisal to ratee attitudes and desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Hypotheses were developed from research on politics in appraisal, the feedback process model of Ilgen, Fisher, and Taylor, 1979, and equity theory (Adams, 1965). Negative relationships between politics and dependent variables were predicted. Two studies were conducted. Study 1 used 97 professionals in two organizations to test the effects of hypothetical political use of appraisal on their attitudes and desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Study 2 used 145 professionals in two organizations to investigate the relationship of politics in performance appraisal to ratee attitudes and desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Results of both studies generally supported the hypothesized negative relationship between political distortion of ratings and ratee attitudes and desire to respond to feedback. A tentative model of the effects of politics in performance appraisal was presented and implications for researchers and

practitioners were presented and directions for future research were discussed.

**The Effects of Politically Biased Performance  
Appraisal on Ratee Job Attitudes and Desire to Respond  
to Feedback**

The appraisal of employee performance has been a research concern of applied psychologists for over 70 years (Landy & Farr, 1983). Performance evaluation remains a vital topic in the organizational sciences literature. For example, several applied psychology journals (e.g., Personnel Psychology, Journal of Applied Psychology, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes) devote significant portions of each issue to articles on its study and practice.

Performance appraisal is also of concern to businesses and organizations and plays a major role in personnel and organizational decisions (Landy & Farr, 1983). Its importance is highlighted by the number of organizations that practice it. Locher and Teel (1988) estimate that over 92 percent of all U.S. organizations use some form of formal employee performance evaluation.

Performance appraisal is used by organizations for many purposes. Performance ratings are used for validating employee selection procedures, making

compensation and promotion decisions, establishing training program objectives, monitoring employee performance, and providing feedback to employees (Cleveland, Murphy, & Williams, 1989; Landy & Farr, 1983). It is seen by practitioners as a significant means of improving performance and productivity of both individuals and organizations (Longenecker, 1989).

Performance appraisal continues to be an integral part of the work of human resource practitioners. Given its widespread use and importance to organizational functioning, it is not surprising that it is a major topic of study in personnel and organizational psychology. The present research attempts to add to this body of research knowledge by assessing the effects of political bias in rating. The present study will use both survey and simulation techniques in a field setting to investigate the relationship between politically biased use of performance appraisal and ratee job attitudes and desire to respond to feedback.

### Past Research in Performance Appraisal:

#### Increasing Accuracy

There are numerous means of assessing employee performance including production and personnel records, self-ratings, and peer ratings. Despite the numerous methods of evaluation available to practitioners, the most widely used means of performance appraisal is supervisory judgment of performance (Landy & Farr, 1983). These methods call for supervisors to provide ratings of subordinate performance. Ratings are made relative to other employees and/or to some pre-determined standard of performance.

Research on judgmental appraisal methods has focused on reducing unintentional errors. These biases include halo error, leniency/severity bias, and central tendency bias. A variety of approaches to reducing these errors has been examined. For example, various rating instruments (e.g., trait scales, Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales, Behavioral Observation Scales, Mixed Standard Scales) have been developed and studied (for a review see Landy & Farr, 1983). More recently, researchers have focused on the

cognitive processes involved in making ratings of performance (e.g., Feldman, 1981).

Additionally, rater training programs (e.g., rater error training, rater accuracy training, frame of reference training) have been developed and researched (for a review see Smith, 1981). The major purpose of these instruments and programs has been to increase accuracy in rating.

Most of the past research assumes that raters are motivated to provide accurate ratings of employee performance. If they are incapable of providing accurate ratings, it is thought to be due to a lack of training or due to problems with the rating instruments. This research further assumes that true performance evaluations for ratees exist (i.e., "true scores"). There are numerous definitions of and issues concerning accuracy and "true score" (Sulsky & Balzer, 1988). However, nearly all definitions of accuracy assume that true scores do exist and that inaccuracy is due to the combined effects of random error and systematic error (i.e., bias).

Past research has assumed that raters attempt to give ratings which are as accurate as possible. Any



inaccuracy has been assumed to be due to unintentional bias. Banks and Murphy (1985) contend that the question of the raters' willingness to convey accurate appraisals has been largely ignored by researchers. Banks and Murphy suggest that the assumption that raters are motivated to provide accurate ratings of subordinate performance in organizations may be unrealistic.

#### Recent Research in Performance Appraisal:

##### Rater Motivation

The issue of the rater's motivation in rating behavior has been recently addressed by a number of authors (Banks & Murphy, 1985; Longenecker, 1989; Bernardin & Villanova, 1986). These authors posit that raters in organizations are rarely motivated to provide accurate appraisals. Further, in some cases, raters may be strongly motivated to provide inaccurate ratings (Longenecker et al., 1987).

These various motivations may not be present in typical laboratory performance appraisal research, where raters and ratees usually have no vested interest in the ratings given or received. Further, raters and ratees are unlikely to have any subsequent

contact with each other following the experiment (Ilgen & Favero, 1985).

In contrast to the laboratory, performance appraisal in organizations has a number of significant implications for both the rater and the ratee. For example, raters in organizations usually have subsequent interactions with ratees, and their ratings are often subject to review by their superiors (Ilgen & Favero, 1985). It is apparent, therefore, that performance appraisal in organizations has significant consequences for raters and ratees.

One significant consequence of performance appraisal in organizations is its effect on ratee compensation and/or promotion (Mohrman, Resnick-West, & Lawler, 1989). Additionally, performance appraisal is used to assist in employee counseling and development. However, in achieving these ends, performance appraisal creates a written document which can follow the ratee throughout his or her career with the organization (Longenecker et al., 1988).

Recent research suggests that raters take the consequences of their ratings into account when completing performance evaluations. For example,

results from a study by Longenecker et al. (1987) suggested that raters are more lenient when their ratings will be used to determine compensation. Zedeck and Cascio (1982) found that the ratings given identical performance differed, depending on the purpose for the rating (research vs. administrative). Ratings to be used for administrative purposes tended to be more lenient than ratings made for research purposes. Research by Williams, DeNisi, Blencoe, and Cafferty (1985) suggests that appraisal for feedback and development purposes is less prone to leniency than appraisal for administrative purposes. It is apparent from this body of research that rating purpose has an effect on performance ratings.

Cleveland et al. (1989), in summarizing research on the multiple purposes of performance appraisals, concluded that raters consider the ultimate impact of the ratings given when completing performance appraisals. Further, interviews of managers by Longenecker et al. (1987) suggested that raters consider the multiple purposes for ratings prior to completing appraisal forms. According to Longenecker et al., raters determine the consequences of each

purpose and complete written appraisals with the most important consequences in mind. All other purposes are thus de-emphasized.

#### Politically Motivated Rating Behavior

Recent research (e.g., Cleveland et al., 1989; Longenecker et al., 1987; Banks & Murphy, 1985) has indicated that raters in organizations take the consequences of their ratings into account when completing performance appraisals. It is possible that raters intentionally distort ratings to affect the appraisal consequences for themselves and/or their subordinates (Longenecker et al., 1987).

Research by Longenecker et al. suggests that raters in organizations may have numerous motivations for distorting ratings. Raters may distort ratings to avoid conflict with employees, to motivate subordinates, and to affect compensation/promotion (Longenecker, 1991).

In in-depth interviews of sixty executives, Longenecker et al. (1987) found that motivations of raters, precipitated by political factors within the organization, may be largely responsible for many "errors" in rating. According to these authors, past

research assuming accuracy as the rater's primary goal "...ignores one important point. Appraisals take place in an organizational environment that is anything but completely rational, straightforward, or dispassionate. In this environment, accuracy does not seem to matter to managers, quite so much as discretion, effectiveness, or more importantly, survival" (Longenecker et al., p. 184).

Managers noted that political considerations are nearly always part of the appraisal process. They believed that factors other than the employees' actual performance influence the ratings given by appraisers (Longenecker et al., 1987). Additionally, managers said organizational culture has a great deal of influence on the use of politics in appraisal. Further, managers believed that increased political use of appraisals was precipitated by a lack of top management support for and use of appraisals. Additionally, managers believed that a lack of appraisal training, and the view that appraisal is an unnecessary bureaucratic exercise, led to politically motivated rating distortion (Longenecker, 1989).

Managers noted that political culture tends to cascade down through organizations. Political use of appraisals at upper levels of the organization was thought to lead to political use at subsequent lower levels (Longenecker, 1989). Additionally, managers indicated that they did not receive adequate performance feedback themselves. They felt that this was due to the political culture discouraging performance feedback (Longenecker, 1988). Managers indicated that this lack of feedback led to feelings of increased stress and role ambiguity.

#### Managers' Rationales for Inflating/Deflating Ratings

Managers in the study by Longenecker (1989) said that there are many reasons for distorting ratings. Further, they said that these political reasons produce an inflation or deflation of subordinate ratings.

Research by Longenecker (1989) and Longenecker et al. (1987) suggested that managers may inflate subordinate ratings for a number of reasons, including

- 1) A belief that accurate ratings would reduce the subordinate's motivation and performance;

- 2) A desire to increase employee eligibility for merit increases;
- 3) A wish to avoid the creation of a negative permanent record which could harm the employee's career;
- 4) The need to protect good performers whose performance deficits are due to personal problems;
- 5) A desire to reward good recent performance;
- 6) The wish to reward employees showing great effort despite poor results;
- 7) A desire to avoid confrontation with problem employees;
- 8) An attempt to get a disliked employee promoted out of their department;
- 9) A strong positive feeling about the employee;
- 10) A desire to keep performance problems within the department;
- 11) A desire to make themselves look good in the eyes of their superiors.

Prior research has suggested that ratings may be inflated due to one or more of the above-cited

rationales. For example, research by Larson (1986) suggested that managers are reluctant to give negative feedback. Additionally, Cardy and Dobbins (1982) found that liking for the ratee was associated with rating leniency. Although managers said that they are reluctant to deflate ratings due to legal, ethical and motivational consequences, negative distortions do happen. Managers in the Longenecker (1989) and Longenecker et al. (1987) research cited the following rationales for deflating subordinate ratings:

- 1) To scare better performance out of an employee (e.g., a "kick in the pants");
- 2) To punish a difficult employee;
- 3) To encourage a problem employee to quit;
- 4) To create a strong case for a planned termination;
- 5) To minimize the amount of merit increase an employee receives;
- 6) To comply with organizational pressures discouraging high ratings.

Additionally, managers indicated that written appraisal (for administrative purposes) can be more



positive or negative than spoken feedback given to employees at the time of the appraisal. Managers may indeed inflate written ratings but give more accurate verbal feedback. Alternatively, managers may deflate ratings to comply with organizational pressures against giving high ratings which would lead to increased compensation. In these cases managers may also give more accurate verbal feedback (Longenecker et al., 1987).

It is apparent that managers view performance appraisal, at least in part, as a discretionary management tool used to achieve personal and organizational goals (Longenecker & Ludwig, 1990). Managers take the consequences of appraisals into account prior to making ratings and then may distort ratings to bring about desired consequences (Cleveland et al., 1989; Longenecker, 1989). Research (e.g., Longenecker, 1989; Longenecker et al., 1987) suggests that managers believe that they have the ability to make fairly accurate ratings. Further, this research suggests that bias (systematic error) is, at least in part, intentional.

Recent research has begun to study the possibility that raters intentionally distort ratings to achieve personal and organizational goals. The organizational and political pressures that influence rating behavior are now attracting research interest (Longenecker et al., 1987).

Consequences of Politically Biased Feedback: A Research Gap

Whereas recent research suggests that managers may distort the ratings and feedback given to employees (Longenecker, 1989; Longenecker et al., 1987), the consequences of the distortions in terms of employee motivation, trust, self-esteem, and development have not been investigated.

Previous research (e.g., Bannister, 1986; Florin-Thuma & Boudreau, 1987; Guzzo, Jette, & Katzell, 1985; Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979; Ilgen & Moore, 1987; Kopelman, 1986; Landy, Farr, & Jacobs, 1982) has shown an association between performance feedback (and feedback characteristics) and subsequent employee motivation and job attitudes. When managers distort ratings in an attempt to motivate employees (and/or achieve other goals), it is possible that the

effects on employees are not the desired ones. Politically biased performance feedback could lead to reduced motivation and negative job attitudes in ratees. Ilgen et al., (1979) present a model of performance feedback which demonstrates how feedback can affect motivation and performance. This model, along with other relevant research, will be presented in the following section to show how politically biased feedback could affect the feedback-motivation and feedback-job attitude relationships.

#### Performance Feedback and Employee Motivation

Performance feedback can come from various sources; however, the most significant source of feedback in organizations is primarily an annual or semi-annual formal performance review conducted by an employee's immediate supervisor (Landy & Farr, 1983). The usual result of this appraisal is a document indicating how well the employee has performed over the past year or half-year. The appraisal is usually used in making administrative decisions concerning compensation and promotion (Landy & Farr).

In addition to its use for administrative functions, performance appraisal/feedback is intended

to give employees an idea of how well they are performing and to help them set goals for future performance (Latham & Wexley, 1981). The positive relation between goal setting and motivation is well established by empirical literature (for a review, see Locke, Shaw, Saari, & Latham, 1981). Employees use feedback concerning their performance to set goals for future performance (Locke, 1970).

Previous literature suggests that accurate feedback is a necessary condition for goal setting to take place (Latham & Yukl, 1975). According to goal theory (Locke, 1968; Locke et al., 1981), motivation (and thus performance) will increase if feedback leads to the setting of specific challenging goals.

Larson (1989) posits that feedback is so essential that without it goal setting will have little, if any, impact on sustained performance. Additionally, Tziner and Latham (1989) found that feedback followed by goal setting leads to increased satisfaction and organizational commitment.

The probability that feedback will lead to goal setting is increased if it is perceived by the ratee as accurate (Latham & Wexley, 1981). In the absence

of feedback, or if the feedback is not accepted, motivation will be reduced (Campion & Lord, 1982). Research on the link between feedback and performance as a process (Ilgen et al., 1979) offers insight into the role of feedback in employee motivation and performance.

The feedback process model of Ilgen et al. (1979) (see Figure 1) posits that feedback, if accepted, will lead to motivation to respond, which will lead to goal setting, which will then lead to performance. As shown in Figure 1, employee acceptance of feedback is essential to the feedback--> motivation--> goal setting--> performance process. The model suggests that a lack of feedback or lack of feedback acceptance will lead to reduced ratee motivation, and thus, reduced performance.

Ilgen et al., (1979) delineated a number of variables which can affect employee acceptance of feedback. Research concerning these variables and the potential implications of politically motivated

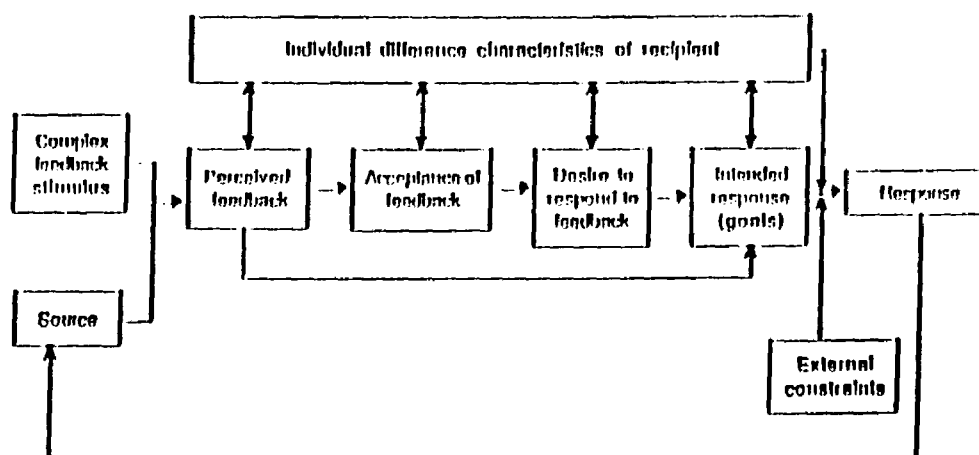


Figure 1. Ilgen, Fisher and Taylor's (1979) feedback process model.

appraisal on feedback acceptance are presented in the following sections.

### Acceptance of Feedback

Assuming feedback is given, the feedback source and the feedback message are important determinants of its acceptance.

Feedback Source. As previously discussed, feedback in organizations comes from many sources. Feedback can come from supervisors (Heneman, 1986), self-assessments (Levine, 1980), subordinates (Mount, 1984), peers (McEvoy & Buller, 1987), and the work itself (e.g., production records; Heneman, 1986).

Feedback also can come in different forms (e.g., written vs. spoken; formal vs. informal). In the context of organizational performance appraisal, the source is usually an annual or semi-annual performance review completed by the employee's immediate supervisor. Recent research suggests that feedback source characteristics affect employee performance. A study by Becker and Klimoski (1989) suggested that supervisory feedback was associated with improved job performance while feedback from self and peers was not. According to Ilgen et al. (1979) the two major

components of the source affecting feedback acceptance are the source's power and the source's credibility.

**Source Power.** The power of the source, relative to the ratee, influences feedback acceptance. Ilgen et al. (1979) suggested that the increased source power will lead to increased feedback acceptance. Regardless of employees' acceptance of the feedback, source power affects employees' desire to respond (Carrol & Schneier, 1982). Research by Carrol and Schneier suggested that the greater the power of the source to reward and/or punish the subordinate, the greater the desire to respond. Additionally, research by Earley (1986) suggested that the importance of the feedback (i.e., its impact on compensation and/or promotion) mediates the feedback-performance relation. He found that employees are more likely to respond to feedback when the feedback source has the power for reward or punishment.

**Source Credibility.** According to Ilgen et al. (1979), source credibility is the principal source characteristic affecting acceptance of feedback. Credibility is determined by the recipient's perception of the source's expertise, the recipient's



trust in the source's motives, and the reliability of the source. Earley (1986) demonstrated that employee trust in the feedback source mediated the influence of feedback on work performance in both the United States and the United Kingdom. This research suggests that source characteristics influence feedback acceptance. Specifically, the greater the source's perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and power, the greater the ratee's acceptance of feedback. It is possible that perceptions of political use of performance appraisal could reduce ratee acceptance of feedback by reducing trust in the source of the rating. The present study will investigate the hypothesis that perceived political use of performance appraisal will be associated with ratee's reduced rating acceptance, trust in the rater (source), and the appraisal process (H1).

**Feedback Message.** The feedback message has two major attributes which affect feedback acceptance: the sign (positive vs. negative) of the feedback and the consistency of the message (Ilgen et al., 1979).

**Feedback Sign.** In general, positive feedback is more readily accepted than negative feedback (Landy &

Farr, 1983). According to Ilgen et al. (1979), positive feedback is consistent with most individuals' self images and is therefore more readily accepted. Recent research has supported the effects of feedback sign. For example, Russell and Goode (1988) found that managers' satisfaction with their appraisal was predicted by the sign of the feedback. Managers in this study were more satisfied with positive feedback than with negative feedback. This body of research suggests that positive feedback is positively related to feedback acceptance.

Research suggests that inflated appraisals will be readily accepted by employees (Ilgen et al., 1979). Inflated appraisal presumably gives ratees the perception that their performance is at least acceptable. Therefore, ratees will believe that there is no need for improvement. Thus, the present research will investigate the hypothesis that politically inflated appraisal will not be associated with desire to respond to the feedback (H2).

Negative feedback tends not to be as readily accepted as positive feedback (Landy & Farr, 1983). Recent research has shown negative feedback to lead to

the belief that the rater has an inaccurate impression of ratee performance (Coleman, Jussim, & Abraham, 1987). Acceptance of negative feedback will be even lower (thus lowered goal setting) if the source is lacking in credibility. Research by Podsakoff and Farh (1989) suggested that negative feedback led to increased goal setting only if the source was seen as credible. The present study will investigate the hypothesis that ratings which are perceived to be deflated for political reasons will not be accepted as accurate by ratees (H3). Additionally, deflated ratings could potentially have effects on employee attitudes (Pearce & Porter, 1986). The present study will test the hypothesis that ratings deflated for political reasons will be associated with reduced trust in the source, the appraisal process, and the organization itself (H4).

**Feedback Consistency.** Research has shown that inconsistent feedback is not accepted as readily as consistent feedback (Stone & Stone, 1985). Ilgen et al. (1979) assume that inconsistent feedback may confuse the recipient or be attributed to sources beyond the employee's control and therefore not be

accepted. As inconsistent feedback is less accepted, it is assumed that it could lead to reduced employee motivation and performance.

As previously discussed, Longenecker (1989) provides evidence that there may be politically motivated inconsistency between spoken appraisal and the appraisal that is written for administrative purposes. For example, written appraisals (for administrative purposes) may be inflated while the spoken message is more negative. This could be due to managers' reluctance to adversely affect employee compensation and various other motivations (presented earlier). Managers may then give more accurate spoken feedback to employees.

Alternatively, due to other political reasons (e.g., budgetary constraints) the written appraisal may be more negative than the spoken appraisal. For example, a manager may feel organizational pressures not to give superior ratings due to the consequences in terms of merit pay increases. However, spoken feedback may indicate the employee did, in fact, exhibit superior performance.

The present study will investigate the hypothesis that politically motivated inconsistent feedback will be associated with reduced acceptance and reduced desire to respond to the feedback (H5). Additionally, the hypothesis that the perception of politically biased inconsistency in the rating process is associated with reduced trust in the appraisal source, the appraisal process, and the organization itself, will be tested (H6).

**Absence of Feedback.** Research by Ashford (1986) and Ashford and Cummings (1983) suggests that performance feedback is a valued resource for employees. These authors posit that individuals who do not receive adequate feedback will attempt to obtain it from organizational and other sources. Recent research (Longenecker & Gioia, 1988) suggests that organizational politics may cause managers not to receive adequate feedback.

Longenecker and Gioia (1988) provided evidence that high level executives desire, yet do not receive, regular performance feedback. Managers reported that a lack of appraisal led to a negative attitude toward their supervisors, increased anxiety and frustration,

and a poorer job of appraising their own subordinates. Additionally, McCarty (1986) demonstrated that a lack of feedback was associated with lowered self-confidence and expected performance in both men and women.

The preceding sections address the effects of appraisal politics on motivation through the feedback-performance process (Ilgen et al., 1979). It is possible that perceptions of political appraisal behavior could have additional effects on employees through employees' feelings of inequity (Adams, 1965). The link between inequity and negative outcomes (e.g., reduced motivation; negative job attitudes) is well established in the organizational sciences literature (for a review, see Greenberg, 1982). The possible effects of politically biased appraisals on equity perceptions are presented in the following section.

#### Equity and Fairness Perceptions in Performance Appraisal

Equity theory (Adams, 1965) suggests that employees compare their ratio of inputs (e.g., performance) to outcomes (e.g., appraisal,

compensation) to some internal standard and/or a comparison other. The relation between inequity/unfairness and negative outcomes has been well established by researchers (Greenberg, 1982). Although much of the research on equity has been done in the reward allocation area (e.g., distributive justice), recent research has shown the importance of procedural factors in determining rewards (e.g., procedural justice; for a review, see Greenberg, 1986). Additionally, researchers have investigated the role of distributive and procedural justice (fairness) in the area of performance appraisal (Dipboye & de Pontbriand, 1981; Greenberg, 1986; Landy, Barnes-Farrell, & Cleveland, 1980; Landy, Barnes, & Murphy, 1978).

The importance of perceived fairness (equity) in performance appraisal has been highlighted by Greenberg (1986). He delineated determinants of perceived performance appraisal fairness. Respondents indicated that there were both distributive and procedural factors that determined fairness and satisfaction with the appraisal process. These procedural factors include rater familiarity with

ratee's work, consistent application of standards, receipt of rating based on performance achieved, and recommendations for salary/promotion being based on the appraisal. Additionally, a study by Folger and Konovsky (1989) found procedural justice factors in pay raise determination to account for more variance than distributive justice factors in the dependent variables trust in supervisor and organizational commitment. It is apparent from this research that fairness is an important determinant of employee satisfaction with performance appraisal systems.

It is possible that perceptions of political bias affect motivation through employee perceptions of unfairness in the appraisal system. Employees may feel that they are receiving equal or lesser outcomes for superior performance if they perceive political bias in the ratings; therefore, they may feel that the appraisal system is unfair. When this is the case, their subsequent motivation could be reduced. Further, satisfaction and commitment to the organization and the appraisal system could also be reduced. The present study will investigate the



relationship between inequity and employee attitudes and desire to respond to feedback (H7).

Due to past research that demonstrated individuals have a greater tolerance for positive inequity (e.g., outcomes greater than inputs; Lane & Messe', 1972) it is hypothesized that politically inflated appraisals will not be associated with greater desire to respond to feedback (H2). However, when employees believe that other employees have received inflated ratings (while they have received accurate or deflated ones) inequity perceptions may be experienced. The present study will investigate the hypothesis that inequity perceptions will be associated with reduced desire to respond to feedback (H7).

Further, in the case where employees perceive that other employees have received politically inflated ratings, it is hypothesized that trust in the appraisal source, organization, and appraisal system will be reduced (H7a). Additionally, the hypothesis that felt inequity will be associated with reduced trust in appraisal process and in the organization, will be tested (H8). Finally, the hypothesis that inequity perceptions will be associated with lowered

belief in appraisal system value will be investigated (H9).

As previously discussed, research by Longenecker (1989) suggested that verbal feedback from supervisors may differ from written feedback (e.g., for administrative purposes). Written feedback can be more positive than spoken or vice versa.

Research on inequity in organizations (e.g., Greenberg, 1982) suggests that when employees do not receive rewards due them, motivation will be reduced and negative job attitudes will increase. In the event that verbal feedback differs from written feedback it is suggested that these negative outcomes will be manifested. For example, a case where a manager tells an employee he/she is doing an "outstanding" job yet the appraisal reads "satisfactory" could lead to reduced acceptance and desire to respond to feedback (H5a) and also to reduced trust in rater and in the appraisal process (H6a). The present research will test these hypotheses.

### Overview of the Present Study

Despite the vast amount of past research on performance appraisal, there remain areas in need of further study. Prior appraisal research has not adequately addressed the issues of how performance appraisal is conducted in organizations or the motivations of raters in organizations. In response to this, recent research has demonstrated that raters in organizations have numerous motivations other than rating accuracy. Whereas researchers have identified a number of political motivations that might cause raters to distort ratings, the effects of these distortions have not been investigated.

The consequences of distorted ratings warrant research for several reasons. Accepted feedback is a necessary component of the performance appraisal-performance improvement process. If politically motivated distortions reduce feedback acceptance, employee motivation may be reduced. Additionally, perceptions of inequity in appraisal have been demonstrated to have negative consequences. If politically motivated distortions lead to inequity perceptions, negative outcomes may result.

Managers may believe that they are distorting ratings for valid reasons. However, the potential negative results of the distortions may outweigh any intended benefit of their use. The present study is an attempt to determine the consequences of politically motivated distortions in performance appraisal.

The present research will use the 1979 Ilgen et al. feedback model, along with research evidence from goal setting and equity theories of motivation, as starting points in investigating the effects of politically motivated rating distortion on ratee attitudes and desire to respond to feedback.

#### Toward a Model of Politics in Performance Appraisal

As the literature supporting the hypotheses of the present study comes from various theories, it is hoped that the results of this research will be a first step in developing a model of the effects of politics in performance appraisal. This model (See Figure 2) could take the form of: The general construct of politics in appraisal leading to perceptions and

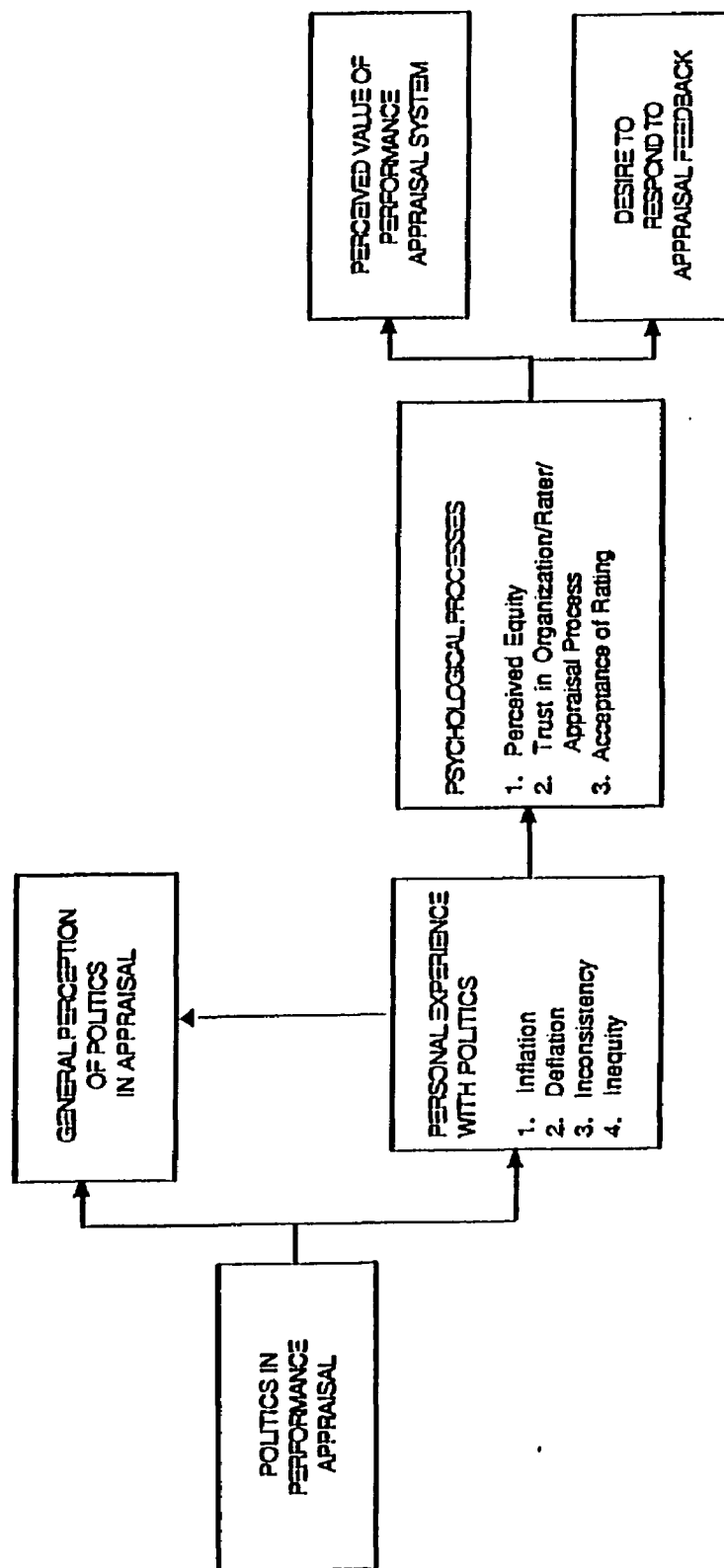


Figure 2. Tentative model of the effects of politics in performance appraisal.

experiences with politics (e.g., inflation, deflation, inconsistency, inequity). Personal experiences with politics might then lead to psychological processes such as perceived equity, trust (in organization, rater, appraisal process), perceived value of the appraisal system, and acceptance of appraisal feedback. Finally, these psychological processes might lead to desire to respond to appraisal feedback. The viability of such a model will be further addressed in the discussion section of this paper.

### Hypotheses

The present research consists of two studies, a vignette manipulation experiment and a field survey. Previous sections discussed literature on politics in performance appraisal, performance feedback, and equity theory. Hypotheses were developed, based on these bodies of research, concerning employee attitudes and desire to respond to feedback. These hypotheses are presented in the following sections. Hypotheses are presented separately due to the fact that study 1 involves manipulations of politics in appraisal and study 2 deals with perceptions of politics in appraisal. Numbered hypotheses in each

study are essentially identical except for the aforementioned difference. Hypothesis 1 could not be tested in the simulation study.

#### Study 1 (Simulation)

- H2: Ratings inflated due to political factors will have no effect on desire to respond to appraisal feedback.
- H3: Ratings deflated due to political factors will result in lower rating acceptance.
- H4: Politically motivated deflation of ratings will result in lower trust in the rater, the organization, and the appraisal process.
- H5: Politically motivated inconsistency between written appraisal and verbal feedback during the appraisal interview will result in lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback and rating acceptance.
- H5a: Ratees receiving verbal feedback at the appraisal interview which is more positive than their written appraisal will have a lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback versus ratees whose

written feedback is more positive than  
or equal to their spoken feedback.

H6: Politically motivated inconsistency between  
written appraisal and verbal feedback in the  
appraisal interview will result in lower  
trust in rater and the appraisal process.

H6a: Ratees receiving verbal feedback at the  
appraisal interview which is more  
positive than their written appraisal  
will have lower trust in the rater and  
in the appraisal process.

H7: Inequity in the appraisal process will result  
in lower desire to respond to appraisal  
feedback.

H7a: When co-workers receive inflated  
ratings, ratees who did not receive  
inflated ratings will have lower desire  
to respond to appraisal feedback.

H8: Inequity in performance appraisal will result  
in lower trust in rater, the appraisal  
process and the organization.



- H9: Inequity in performance appraisal will result in lower perceptions of the value of the appraisal system to the organization.

Study 2 (Field Survey)

- H1: Perception of politics in the appraisal process will be negatively associated with rating acceptance, trust in rater, and perception of appraisal system value.
- H2: Ratings perceived to be inflated due to political factors will have no association with desire to respond to appraisal feedback.
- H3: Ratees' perceptions that their ratings are deflated due to political factors will be negatively associated with rating acceptance.
- H4: Perceived politically motivated deflation of ratings will be negatively associated with trust in rater, the organization, and the appraisal process.
- H5: Ratee perception of politically motivated inconsistency between written appraisal and verbal feedback during the appraisal interview will be negatively associated with

desire to respond to appraisal feedback and rating acceptance.

- H6: Perception of politically motivated inconsistency between written appraisal and verbal feedback in the appraisal interview will be negatively associated with trust in rater and the appraisal process.
- H7: Ratee perception of inequity in the appraisal process will be negatively associated with desire to respond to appraisal feedback.
- H8: Ratee perception of inequity in the appraisal process will be negatively associated with trust in rater, the appraisal process and the organization.
- H9: Inequity in performance appraisal will be negatively associated with perceptions of the value of the appraisal system to the organization.

### Overview of Methodology

The present research consisted of two studies. Study 1 manipulated all independent variables through the use of vignettes. In study 1, subjects completed questionnaires after reading vignettes describing their hypothetical rating and the hypothetical organizational conditions surrounding it. This study assessed the extent to which manipulations of organizational politics affect ratee attitudes and ratee desire to respond to feedback in an experimental design.

Study 2 assessed the extent to which perceptions of organizational politics in the appraisal process were associated with ratee desire to respond to appraisal feedback and with ratee attitudes toward appraisal. Subjects completed a survey measuring their perceptions of their organization's appraisal system, their attitudes toward it, and their desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Hypotheses concerning the relationships between appraisal politics and ratee motivation and attitudes were tested.

This two-part methodology was designed to achieve two purposes. Study 1 allowed manipulation of

politics and ratings by simulation whereas otherwise these variables would have been impossible to manipulate. Study 2 was designed to maximize generalizability by assessing perceptions of politics and performance appraisal as they existed in an actual organization. Therefore external and internal validity should have been maximized by the two-part design of the present research.

### Study 1

#### Method

##### Subjects

The subjects for this research were 47 employees from a large international consulting firm and 50 employees from a large midwestern insurance company. Subjects were selected on the basis of 1) having been recipients of annual or semi-annual formal performance reviews and 2) that they would continue to receive performance evaluations.

Surveys were randomly distributed by a contact person in each organization. Subjects from the consulting firm were professional level employees (e.g., managers, partners, consultants) located in offices throughout the southwest United States.

Subjects from the insurance company were professional level employees (e.g., managers, district managers, agents) working in offices throughout one midwestern state. Of the 108 distributed in the consulting firm, 47 were completed, yielding a response rate of 43.5%. Of the 162 distributed in the insurance company, 50 were completed, yielding a response rate of 30.8%. The overall response rate was 35.9%.

The consulting firm sub-sample contained 36 males and 11 females. Of these subjects, 34% were between the ages of 20 and 29, 38.3% were between the ages of 30 and 39, 21.3% were between the ages of 40 and 49, and 3% were over the age of 50. Further, 42.6% had been employed in their job for less than 5 years, 34% for between 5 and 10 years, and 23.4% over 10 years.

The insurance company sub-sample was made up of 33 males and 17 females. Of these subjects, 22% were between the ages of 20 and 29, 28% were between the ages of 30 and 39, 34% were between the ages of 40 and 49, and 16% were over the age of 50. Of these subjects, 32% had been employed at their present job for less than 5 years, 28% for between 5 and 10 years, and 40% for over 10 years.

Therefore the entire sample consisted of 69 males and 28 females. Furthermore, 27.8% were between the ages of 20 and 29, 33% were between the ages of 30 and 39, 27.8% were between the ages of 40 and 49, and 11.3% were over the age of 50. Of these subjects, 37.1% had been employed at their present job for less than 5 years, 30.9% for between 5 and 10 years, and 32% for over 10 years.

#### Procedure

The contact person in each company randomly distributed packets of materials to employees (one per subject). This packet contained a cover letter (Appendix A) which explained the study to the participants and assured confidentiality. Also included in the packet was one of 27 vignettes which are described in the following section. Each subject received only one vignette. The vignette requested subjects to assume that they received a certain rating given the circumstances described in the vignette. Additionally, subjects completed a questionnaire assessing reactions to political use of performance appraisal and desire to respond to appraisal feedback, given the appraisal and organizational conditions

described in the vignette. Subjects mailed the questionnaire directly to the researcher to insure confidentiality.

### Vignettes

Due to the fact that the present study could not manipulate politics and ratings in the participating organizations, the independent variables were manipulated through vignettes. The instructions (Appendix B) told subjects to assume that they received the rating described in the vignette, given the organizational conditions described. The vignettes (Appendix C) varied the level of political bias in the subject's ratings (inflated, deflated, accurate) and ratings of co-workers (inflated, deflated, accurate). Additionally, the level of agreement between the subjects' written and spoken feedback (written > spoken, spoken > written, no inconsistency) was varied. Manipulations of political inflation, deflation, and rating inconsistency were developed using factors identified by Longenecker et al. (1987). Each vignette described the subject's written rating, spoken feedback, and "actual performance." Additionally, ratings of co-workers,

and possible political motivations of the organization and supervisor were provided. For example, subjects (in one experimental condition) may have been told that they received a rating of "outstanding" (a "7" on a seven-point scale), whereas their actual performance was "above average" (a "5"), due to their supervisors wishing to avoid conflict with them.

Using a methodology similar to Greenhaus, Seidel, and Marinis (1983), variables (inflation/deflation of subjects' ratings, inflation/deflation of others' ratings, inconsistency between written and spoken feedback) were presented in all possible combinations thus yielding 27 separate vignettes. The vignettes were randomly distributed to the subjects.

Study 1 was, therefore, a 3 (subject rating--inflated, deflated, accurate) X 3 (co-workers' rating--inflated, deflated, accurate) X 3 (subjects' written vs. spoken appraisal--spoken > written, written > spoken, written = spoken) factorial design.

#### Dependent Variables

Due to a lack of available suitable scales of the dependent variables of this study, the variables were measured by a 25-item tailor-made survey instrument



(Appendix D). All items, except demographics, were measured by a 5-point Likert-type scale. Demographic and manipulation check items brought the total number of items to 35.

Acceptance of Feedback. The extent to which subjects accepted their ratings as accurate indicators of their performance was measured by four items (e.g., "Based on my performance, I was accurately evaluated"). This scale used some items adapted from the TAPS scale on ratee perceptions of the appraisal process by Bernardin et al. (1981). Additional items were adapted for use from scales on ratee attitudes on performance feedback by Landy et al. (1978) and Dipboye and de Pontbriand (1981). Coefficient alpha was .90.

Trust in the Organization. Subjects' trust in the hypothetical organization was measured by a four-item measure. Items (e.g., "I trust this organization to act in my best interest") are similar to those from various scales of job involvement, organizational commitment, and organizational climate which appear in Cook, Hepworth, Wall, and Warr (1981). Coefficient alpha was .69.

Trust in the Appraisal Process. Subjects' trust in the hypothetical organization's appraisal process was measured by five items (e.g., "The performance appraisal process in this organization can be trusted"). Items were adapted for inclusion from a measure of fairness by Folger and Konovsky (1989). Additional items were included which were designed to be similar to those addressing trust in the appraisal process from various scales of job involvement, organizational commitment, and organizational climate which appear in Cook et al. (1981). Coefficient alpha was .89.

Trust in the Rater. Subjects' trust in the rater was measured by four items (e.g., "I trust the supervisor who gave me this rating"). Some items for this scale were adapted for inclusion from a measure of fairness by Folger and Konovsky (1989). Additional items were included which were written to be congruent with those tapping rater trust from various sub-scales of job involvement measures which appear in Cook et al. (1981). Coefficient alpha was .84.

Desire to Respond to Appraisal Feedback.

Subjects' desire to respond to appraisal feedback was measured using a scale designed to be similar to various job involvement scales appearing in Cook et al. (1981). Additional items were adapted from a scale on ratee intentions to improve performance by Platz (1985). Subjects' agreement with each of the four items (e.g., "This performance appraisal makes me feel motivated to perform effectively") was measured by a Likert-type scale. Coefficient alpha was .85.

Appraisal System Value. Subjects' perceptions of the value of the hypothetical organization's performance appraisal system were measured by four items (e.g., "The performance appraisal system in this organization is a worthwhile use of resources"). Some items from a measure of employee reactions to appraisal systems by Dipboye and de Pontbriand (1981) were adapted for inclusion. Additional items were written to be similar to those dealing with the value of performance appraisal from various scales of job involvement, organizational commitment, and organizational climate which appear in Cook et al. (1981). Coefficient alpha was .71.

Manipulation check items. Manipulation check items were also included in the questionnaire. These items assessed the extent to which manipulations of rating inflation, deflation, and consistency were successful. For each item (e.g., My written appraisal was more negative than verbal feedback from my supervisor"), subjects indicated their level of agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale. These items appear on the last page of Appendix D.

Demographics. Subjects' sex, age, years of employment, and years of employment at their present job were measured by four items. These items were placed at the end of the survey because research by Roberson and Sundstrom (1990) found that subjects were more likely to complete and return questionnaires when demographic items appeared at the end of the instrument.

### Analysis

Study 1 was analyzed by a 3 [subject rating--inflated ( $n = 26$ ), deflated ( $n = 37$ ), accurate ( $n = 34$ )] X 3 [co-workers' rating--inflated ( $n = 24$ ), deflated ( $n = 38$ ), accurate ( $n = 35$ )] X 3 [(subjects' written vs. spoken appraisal--spoken > written ( $n =$

31), written > spoken ( $n = 35$ ), written = spoken ( $n = 31$ )] factorial ANOVA.

## Results

### Manipulation Check Results

To test the effectiveness of the vignette manipulations, 3 X 3 X 3 factorial ANOVAs were performed. Results indicated significant main effects for subject rating on the manipulation check items assessing inflation ( $F, (2, 71) = 62.03, p < .0001$ ), deflation ( $F, (2, 71) = 97.77, p < .0001$ ), and accuracy ( $F, (2, 71) = 89.47, p < .0001$ ) of ratings.

Subsequent Tukey's Studentized Range (HSD) analyses indicated that subjects receiving inflated ratings had significantly higher mean agreement ( $M = 1.85, n = 26$ ) with the item assessing inflation of rating than subjects receiving accurate ( $M = 4.08, n = 34$ ) or deflated ( $M = 4.05, n = 37$ ) ratings. Additionally, analyses indicated that subjects receiving deflated ratings had significantly higher mean agreement ( $M = 2.14, n = 37$ ) with the item assessing deflation of rating than subjects receiving accurate ( $M = 4.26, n = 34$ ) or inflated ( $M = 4.00, n = 26$ ) ratings. Further, subjects receiving accurate

ratings had significantly higher mean agreement ( $\bar{M} = 1.88$ ,  $n = 34$ ) with the item assessing accuracy of rating than subjects receiving inflated ( $\bar{M} = 4.08$ ,  $n = 26$ ) or deflated ( $\bar{M} = 4.19$ ,  $n = 37$ ) ratings.

Additional ANOVA results indicated significant main effects for positive inconsistency (written appraisal higher than verbal appraisal) ( $F, (2, 71) = 94.68$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), negative inconsistency (verbal higher than written) ( $F, (2, 71) = 124.26$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), and no inconsistency ( $F, (2, 71) = 85.40$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) manipulations of subject ratings on the manipulation check items designed to assess negative, positive, and no inconsistency in appraisal, respectively.

As in the previously discussed results, subsequent HSD tests indicated that subjects had significantly higher agreement with the manipulation check item assessing their given condition than subjects in the remaining conditions. Therefore, manipulations of subject inflation, deflation, accurate, positive inconsistency, negative inconsistency, and no inconsistency were judged to be effective.

### Interrelationships among Variables

As previously mentioned, Study 1 manipulated the variables: Subject rating, co-worker rating, and inconsistency between written and spoken appraisal. The dependent variables: Acceptance of rating, trust in the organization, trust in the rater, trust in the appraisal process, and perceived value of the appraisal system were measured. Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and variable intercorrelations for the dependent measures.

### Analysis of Variance

In order to test the Hypotheses of Study 1, separate 3 X 3 X 3 factorial ANOVAs were performed. Results of these analyses are presented in Tables 2 through 7. As mentioned above, cell sizes were not equal in Study 1. To deal with this issue, a General Linear Model (GLM) approach to ANOVA was used. This approach, suggested by Kirk (1983), helps to minimize the effects of unequal cell sizes. The GLM approach is preferred because it encompasses all ANOVA and regression models. For the purposes of hypothesis

Table 1  
Intercorrelations among variable

Variable	N	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. Accept	97	14.2	5.23	.90					
2. Trust (O)	97	14.0	3.54	.6140*	.69				
3. Trust (P)	97	19.2	4.88	.6543*	.7885*	.89			
4. Trust (R)	97	14.9	4.34	.7179*	.6528*	.6749*	.84		
5. Des. Res.	97	14.1	4.12	.6818*	.6665*	.6677*	.7598*	.85	
6. App. Val.	97	14.2	3.52	.5466*	.7383*	.7772*	.5920*	.5537*	.71

\*p < .0001

Coefficient alphas are presented along the diagonal

Variable names:

1. Acceptance of rating
2. Trust in organization
3. Trust in appraisal process
4. Trust in rater
5. Desire to respond to appraisal feedback
6. Perceived appraisal system value

In all variables, higher scores represent lower variable values



testing, Type III sums of squares were interpreted so as to yield a more conservative test of the hypotheses. Significant main effects are presented by independent variable. Significant interactions are presented following a summary of main effects. [Note: it is acknowledged that several authors (e.g., Kirk, 1982; Ott, Larson & Mendenhall, 1983) would suggest that main effects are rendered uninterpretable when interaction effects are present. However, for clarity of presentation, main effects and interactions are presented separately. It is the present author's position that the small cell sizes for the interactions (discussed in later section) make the interactions virtually uninterpretable. The issue of interactions is also addressed in the discussion section.]

Inflation of ratings. Hypothesis 2 (the first hypothesis tested in Study 1) predicted that inflation of subject ratings would have no effect on subjects' desire to respond to appraisal feedback. ANOVA results (see Table 2) indicated a main effect for subject rating on desire to respond to appraisal feedback ( $F(2,71) = 11.84, p < .0001, \text{omega squared} =$

Table 2

ANOVA results for desire to respond to appraisal feedback

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt; F</u>
Model	25	755.76	30.23	2.46	.0017
Error	71	873.58	12.30		
Total	96	1629.34			

<u>Sources</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt; F</u>
Rating (R)	2	313.14	12.73	.0001
Co-workers (C)	2	46.63	1.89	.1579
Discrepancy (D)	2	13.43	.55	.5818
R X C	4	12.93	.26	.9009
R X D	4	112.92	2.29	.0676
C X D	4	23.42	.48	.7533
R X C X D	7	233.29	2.71	.0151

.173). Follow-up Tukey's (HSD) procedures indicated that subjects who received inflated ratings ( $M = 14.19$ ,  $n = 24$ ) did not significantly differ from subjects receiving deflated ratings ( $M = 16.05$ ,  $n = 37$ ) on mean desire to respond to feedback. However, subjects who received accurate ratings ( $M = 11.85$ ,  $n = 34$ ) indicated significantly greater desire to respond to feedback than subjects receiving inflated ratings ( $M = 14.19$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Deflation of ratings. Hypothesis 3 predicted that ratings deflated due to political factors would result in lower rating acceptance. ANOVA results (see Table 3) indicated a significant main effect ( $F(2,71) = 54.69$ ,  $p < .0001$ , omega squared = .394) for subject rating on rating acceptance.

Differences between all group means were significant in this analysis. Subjects receiving deflated ratings ( $M = 17.81$ ,  $n = 37$ ) had significantly lower rating acceptance than subjects who received inflated ratings ( $M = 14.86$ ,  $n = 26$ ), whose ratings were also lower than subjects who received accurate ratings ( $M = 9.79$ ,  $n = 34$ ), supporting Hypothesis 3.

Table 3

ANOVA Results for acceptance of rating

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt;</u>
Model	25	1949.88	79.80	8.2	.0001
Error	71	675.67	9.52		
Total	96	2625.54			

<u>Sources</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt;</u>
Rating (R)	2	1157.35	60.81	.0001
Co-workers (C)	2	21.96	1.15	.3213
Discrepancy (D)	2	70.47	3.70	.0295
R X C	4	131.30	3.45	.0124
R X D	4	178.16	4.68	.0021
C X D	4	21.32	.56	.6924
R X C X D	7	369.32	5.54	.0001

Hypothesis 4 predicted that subjects who received deflated ratings would have lower trust in the rater, lower trust in the organization, and lower trust in the appraisal process. Analyses indicated main effects for subject rating on trust in the rater (see Table 4) ( $F(2,71) = 16.85$ ,  $p < .0001$ , omega squared = .209), trust in organization (see Table 5) ( $F(2,71) = 12.46$ ,  $p < .0001$ , omega squared = .153), and trust in the appraisal process (see Table 6) ( $F(2,71) = 13.92$ ,  $p < .0001$ , omega squared = .153).

HSD analyses indicated that subjects receiving accurate ratings ( $M = 12.68$ ,  $n = 34$ ) and subjects who received inflated ratings ( $M = 14.85$ ,  $n = 26$ ) had significantly higher mean trust in the rater than subjects who received deflated ratings ( $M = 16.97$ ,  $n = 37$ ). Further, subjects receiving accurate ratings had significantly higher mean trust in the organization ( $M = 11.82$ ,  $n = 34$ ) than subjects receiving deflated ratings ( $M = 15.84$ ,  $n = 37$ ) and subjects receiving inflated ratings ( $M = 14.23$ ,  $n = 26$ ). Finally, subjects receiving accurate ratings had significantly higher mean trust in the appraisal process ( $M = 16.59$ ,  $n = 34$ ) than subjects who received deflated ratings ( $M$

Table 4  
ANOVA results for trust in the rater

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt; F</u>
Model	25	992.69	39.70	3.45	.0001
Error	71	818.28	11.53		
Total	96	1810.97			

<u>Sources</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt; F</u>
Rating (R)	2	327.17	14.19	.0001
Co-workers (C)	2	29.02	1.26	.2902
Discrepancy (D)	2	70.28	3.05	.0537
R X C	4	29.61	.64	.6341
R X D	4	169.32	3.67	.0089
C X D	4	16.15	.35	.8430
R X C X D	7	351.13	4.35	.0005

Table 5  
ANOVA results for trust in the organization

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt; F</u>
Model	25	659.50	26.38	3.47	.0001
Error	71	540.50	7.61		
Total	96	1200.00			

<u>Sources</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt; F</u>
Rating (R)	2	287.42	18.88	.0001
Co-workers (C)	2	152.51	10.02	.0001
Discrepancy (D)	2	12.61	.80	.4539
R X C	4	0.00	0.00	1.0000
R X D	4	16.74	.55	.6999
C X D	4	24.63	.81	.5237
R X C X D	7	191.92	3.60	.0022

Table 6  
ANOVA results for trust in the organization

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt; F</u>
Model	25	1368.85	54.75	4.24	.0001
Error	71	917.17	12.92		
Total	96	2286.02			

<u>Sources</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt; F</u>
Rating (R)	2	454.39	17.59	.0001
Co-workers (C)	2	232.83	9.01	.0003
Discrepancy (D)	2	55.71	2.16	.1233
R X C	4	70.65	1.37	.2539
R X D	4	23.40	.45	.7700
C X D	4	46.69	.90	.4667
R X C X D	7	485.18	5.37	.0001



= 21.65,  $n = 37$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was supported by these results.

Additional ANOVA results (see Table 7) indicated a significant main effect for subject rating ( $F(2,71) = 9.55$ ,  $p < .001$ , omega squared = .12) on perceived appraisal system value. Tukey's (HSD) analyses indicated that subjects whose ratings were deflated had lower mean perceived appraisal system value than subjects receiving accurate ratings ( $M = 15.54$ ,  $n = 37$  vs.  $M = 12.62$ ,  $n = 34$ ). There were no mean differences on this variable between subjects who received inflated ratings and subjects who received accurate ratings ( $M = 14.27$ ,  $n = 26$  vs.  $M = 12.62$ ,  $n = 34$ ).

Inconsistency between written and verbal rating.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that politically motivated inconsistency between written and verbal feedback would result in lower rating acceptance and desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Additionally, Hypothesis 5a predicted that subjects receiving verbal feedback which was more positive than their written appraisal would have lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback than subjects whose written

Table 7  
ANOVA results for perceived appraisal system value

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p < F
Model	25	627.92	25.12	3.16	.0001
Error	71	564.10	7.95		
Total	96	1192.02			

<u>Sources</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p &lt; F</u>
Rating (R)	2	151.69	9.55	.0002
Co-workers (C)	2	132.30	8.33	.0006
Discrepancy (D)	2	58.16	3.66	.0307
R X C	4	0.00	0.00	1.0000
R X D	4	50.27	1.58	.1886
C X D	4	78.10	2.46	.0533
R X C X D	7	172.03	3.09	.0066

appraisal was equal to or more positive than their verbal feedback. ANOVA results indicated no main effect (see Table 3) for inconsistency between written and verbal feedback on rating acceptance ( $F(2,71) = 1.34$ , n.s.) nor on desire to respond to appraisal feedback (see Table 2) ( $F(2,71) = 2.14$ , n.s.). These results failed to support Hypotheses 5 and 5a.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that politically motivated inconsistency between written and spoken performance appraisal feedback would result in lower trust in the rater and lower trust in the appraisal process. Additionally, Hypothesis 6a predicted that these dependent variables would be lower when written appraisal was less positive than spoken feedback. Analyses indicated a main effect for inconsistency on trust in the rater (see Table 4) ( $F(2,71) = 3.67$ ,  $p < .05$ ) but not for trust in the appraisal process (see Table 6) ( $F(2,71) = 2.55$ , n.s.).

HSD tests indicated that subjects who received consistent feedback had higher trust in the rater ( $M = 13.68$ ,  $n = 31$ ) than subjects who received written appraisal more positive than spoken feedback (positive inconsistency) ( $M = 15.68$ ,  $n = 31$ ) and subjects

receiving written appraisal which was more negative than their spoken feedback (negative inconsistency) ( $M = 15.29$ ,  $n = 35$ ). There were no mean differences between subjects receiving negative and positive inconsistency on trust in the rater. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was supported only for trust in the rater but not for trust in the appraisal process. Negative inconsistency (written < verbal feedback) affected subjects' trust in the rater only when compared to subjects who received consistent ratings, thereby offering partial support for Hypothesis 6a.

Additional ANOVA results indicated a significant main effect for rating inconsistency (see Table 7) ( $F(2,71) = 3.66$ ,  $p < .05$ , omega squared = .042) on perceived appraisal system value. Results of Tukey's (HSD) analyses indicated that subjects whose written rating was lower than their spoken feedback had higher mean perceived appraisal system value ( $M = 13.31$ ,  $n = 31$ ) than subjects who received consistent ratings ( $M = 15.19$ ,  $n = 31$ ). There were no mean differences between subjects whose written ratings were greater than their spoken feedback ( $M = 14.13$ ,  $n = 31$ ) and

subjects who received consistent ratings ( $M = 15.19$ ,  $n = 31$ ).

Inequity in appraisal. Hypothesis 7 predicted that inequity in the appraisal process would result in lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback. ANOVA results (see Table 2) indicated that there was no main effect ( $F(2,71) = .92$ , n.s.) for inequity in co-workers' ratings on desire to respond to feedback, failing to support Hypothesis 7.

Hypothesis 7a predicted that, when co-workers' ratings were inflated, subjects receiving accurate ratings and subjects receiving deflated ratings would have lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback than subjects receiving accurate ratings. ANOVA results (see Table 2) indicated no significant interaction between subject rating and co-workers' ratings ( $F(4,71) = 0.43$ , n.s.) on desire to respond to feedback, failing to support Hypothesis 7a.

Hypothesis 8 predicted that inequity in the appraisal process would result in lower trust in the rater, trust in the organization, and trust in the appraisal process. Analyses indicated main effects for co-worker rating on trust in the organization (see

Table 5) ( $F(2,71) = 6.44, p < .0001, \text{omega squared} = .076$ ) and trust in the appraisal process (see Table 6) ( $F(2,71) = 7.81, p < .001, \text{omega squared} = .083$ ). There was no main effect for inequity in co-workers' rating on trust in the rater (see Table 4) ( $F(2,71) = .33, \text{n.s.}$ ).

HSD tests indicated that subjects having co-workers who received accurate ratings had significantly higher mean trust in the organization ( $M = 12.86, n = 35$ ) than subjects having co-workers who received inflated ratings ( $M = 16.08, n = 24$ ). However, there were no mean differences in trust in the organization between subjects having co-workers who received deflated ratings ( $M = 13.74, n = 38$ ) and those having co-workers who received accurate ratings ( $M = 12.86, n = 35$ ). Further, subjects who had co-workers who received accurate ratings had significantly higher mean trust in the appraisal process ( $M = 17.37, n = 35$ ) than subjects having co-workers who received inflated ratings ( $M = 21.38, n = 24$ ) or deflated ratings ( $M = 19.45, n = 38$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 8 was fully supported for trust in the appraisal process but was only partially

supported for trust in the organization. In the case where co-worker's ratings were inflated, subjects reported lower trust in the organization. There was no support for the effects of inequity on trust in the rater.

Hypothesis 9 predicted that inequity in ratings would result in lower perceived value of the appraisal system. Analyses indicated that there was a significant main effect (see Table 7) ( $F(2,71) = 7.90$ ,  $p < .001$ , omega squared = .099) for co-workers' ratings on perceived appraisal system value.

HSD analyses indicated that subjects having co-workers who received accurate ratings had significantly higher mean perceived appraisal system value ( $M = 13.00$ ,  $n = 35$ ) than subjects having co-workers who received inflated ratings ( $M = 16.04$ ,  $n = 24$ ). However, there were no mean differences in perceived appraisal system value between subjects having co-workers who received deflated ratings ( $M = 14.08$ ,  $n = 38$ ) and those having co-workers who received accurate ratings ( $M = 13.00$ ,  $n = 35$ ). Therefore Hypothesis 9 was supported for perceived

appraisal system value only in the case where co-worker's ratings were inflated.

#### Organization Effects

The only significant main effect for subjects' organization was on trust in the appraisal process ( $F(1,55) = 4.54, p < .05, \text{omega squared} = .017$ ). Subjects in the consulting firm had significantly higher mean ( $M = 18.04, n = 47$ ) trust in the appraisal process versus subjects in the insurance company ( $M = 20.24, n = 50$ ). There were no other main effects for organization on any of the dependent measures.

#### Summary

In summary, Hypotheses 3 and 4 were supported by the data, and Hypotheses 6, 6a, 8, and 9 were partially supported by the data. Subjects who received deflated ratings had lower trust in the rater, trust in the organization, trust in the appraisal process, perceived appraisal system value, and lower acceptance of rating. Additionally subjects who received inflated ratings had lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback than subjects who received accurate ratings.



Further, subjects having co-workers who received accurate (equitable) ratings had greater trust in the rater and greater perceived appraisal system value than subjects having co-workers who received inflated (inequitable) ratings. Finally, subjects receiving inconsistent feedback (their verbal feedback was more positive or negative than their written feedback) had lower trust in the rater and perceived appraisal system value. Hypotheses 2, 5, 5a, 7 and 7a were not supported by the data. The results failed to support the hypothesized non-significant relationship between rating inflation and rating acceptance. In this case, inflated ratings resulted in lower rating acceptance. Further, the hypothesized relationships between rating inconsistency and rating acceptance and desire to respond to appraisal feedback were not supported by the results of Study I. Finally, the hypothesized relationship between rating inequity and desire to respond to appraisal feedback was not supported.

#### Interaction Effects

In addition to the main effects in Study 1 there were a number of interactive effects. Significant interactions are presented in the following sections.

### Interaction between Inconsistency and Subject Ratings

ANOVA results indicated significant interaction effects between inconsistency and inflation/deflation of subject rating on acceptance of rating (see Table 3) ( $F(4,71) = 4.68, p < .005, \omega^2 = .058$ ) and trust in the rater (see Table 4) ( $F(4,71) = 3.67, p < .05, \omega^2 = .074$ ). Graphs of the significant interactions (Figures 3 and 4) were drawn to aid in their interpretation. Due to the small cell sizes (see Table 8), caution should be exercised when drawing conclusions based on these interactions. However, the graphs suggest that, in the Study 1 sample, consistent ratings were associated with greater rating acceptance and trust in the rater than were inconsistent ratings except for the case where the ratings were deflated.

### Interaction between Rating, Inconsistency, and Co-Workers Rating

Results of ANOVA analyses (see Tables 2 through 7) indicated three-way interaction effects between subject rating, co-worker rating, and inconsistency in rating for all dependent variables in the present study. Due to the small and missing sample cell sizes

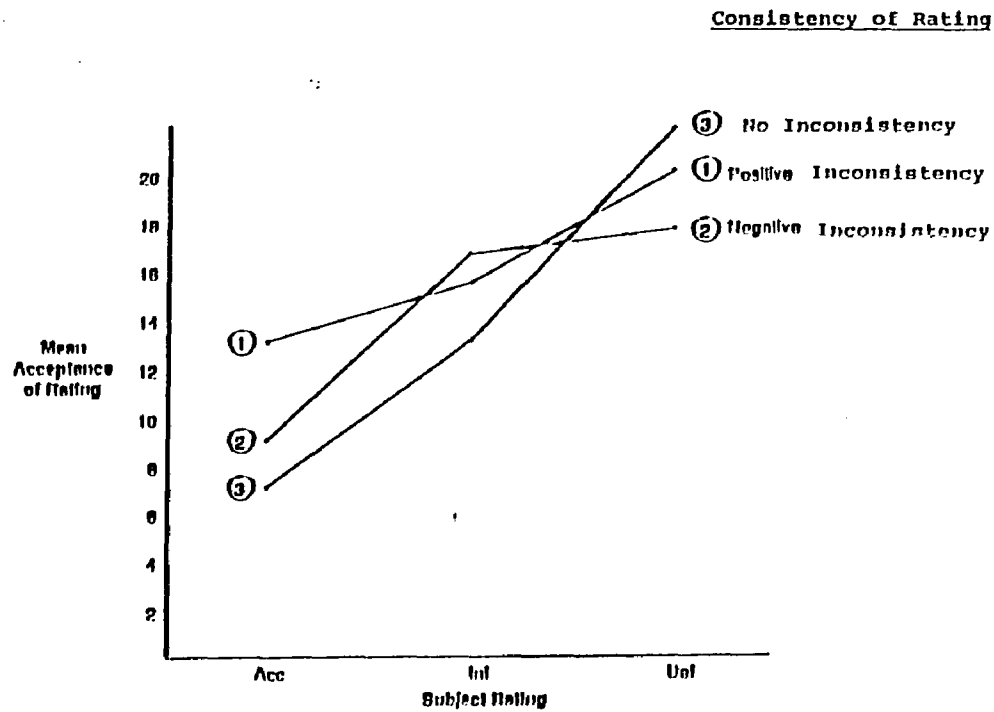


Figure 3. Subject rating X rating consistency interaction for dependent variable: Acceptance of Rating

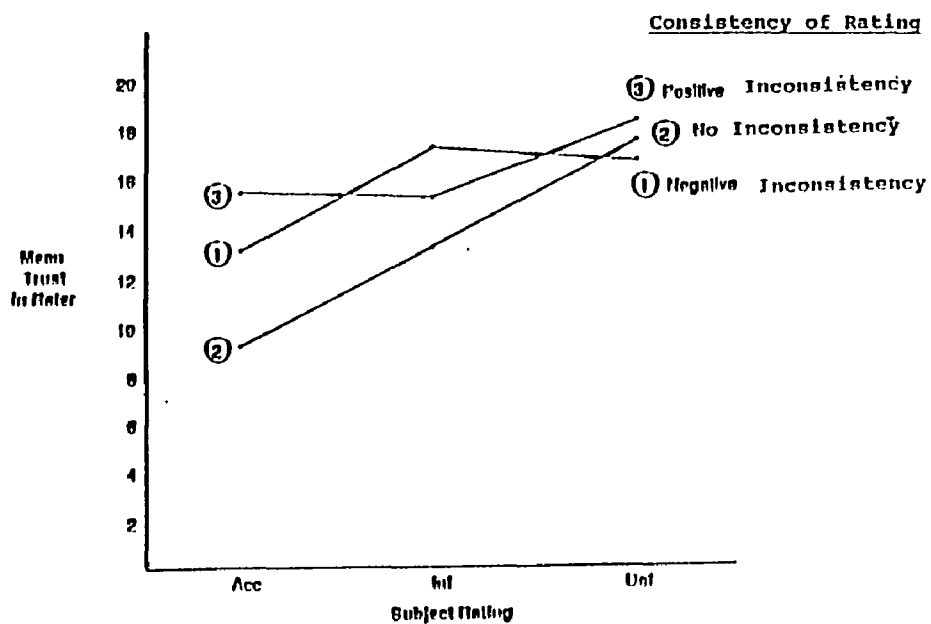


Figure 4. Subject rating x rating consistency interaction for dependent variable: trust in the rater.

Table 8  
Cell sizes and means for subject rating x inconsistency  
interactions

Rating	Inconsist	N	Mean Accept	SD	Mean Trust in Rater	SD
Acc.	none	9	6.8	3.3	8.7	2.3
Acc.	W > V	15	9.9	4.6	13.7	3.1
Acc.	V > W	10	12.3	3.9	14.4	4.6
Def.	none	14	19.3	1.1	16.8	3.2
Def.	V > W	12	15.8	2.4	16.2	2.2
Def.	W > V	11	18.2	4.4	18.0	4.1
Inf.	none	8	13.5	4.6	13.8	4.6
Inf.	V > W	8	16.0	5.0	16.5	5.4
Inf.	W > V	10	15.3	3.2	14.4	2.3

V > W = Verbal > Written Appraisal

W > V = Written > Verbal Appraisal

(see Table 9) and the resulting violation of the ANOVA homogeneity of variance assumption, these interactions were virtually uninterpretable. Therefore, no firm conclusion about the interaction among these independent variables can be drawn based on the present sample.

#### Interaction between Organization x Independent Variables

ANOVA results indicated a significant interaction effect between organization and co-workers ratings on trust in the appraisal process ( $F(2,55) = 3.27, p < .05$ , omega squared = .027). There were no other significant interactions between organization and the independent variables.

A graph of the resulting interaction (see Figure 5) was drawn to aid in its interpretation. This graph suggested that subjects in the consulting firm had slightly less trust in the appraisal process than subjects in the insurance company when co-workers ratings were deflated. This difference, though significant, was slight (accounting for less than 3% of the variance in trust in the appraisal process).

Table 9

Cell sizes and means for subject rating x co-worker rating x inconsistency interactions

Rating	Co-Workers' Rating	Inconsist	N	Mean Scores					Perceived Value of Appraisal System
				Acc.	Trust in Org.	Trust in Appraisal Process	Trust in Rater	Desire to Respond	
Acc.	Acc.	none	4	7.0	9.5	12.3	8.5	10.5	11.8
Acc.	Acc.	S > W	6	12.0	12.5	18.5	15.3	12.7	13.5
Acc.	Acc.	W > S	6	13.3	10.3	15.8	14.5	12.7	10.3
Acc.	Def.	none	3	7.7	13.3	18.7	10.0	11.7	16.3
Acc.	Def.	S > W	5	7.6	10.0	13.2	11.0	11.2	10.2
Acc.	Def.	W > S	2	8.5	10.0	11.0	12.5	9.0	9.0
Acc.	Inf.	none	2	5.5	14.5	20.1	7.5	7.5	15.0
Acc.	Inf.	S > W	4	9.5	15.3	19.8	15.3	14.0	15.3
Acc.	Inf.	W > S	2	13.0	13.5	22.1	16.0	14.5	15.0
Def.	Acc.	none	3	19.7	17.7	23.0	18.0	15.3	17.7
Def.	Acc.	S > W	5	11.8	13.0	17.6	13.6	12.6	11.8
Def.	Acc.	W > S	3	18.3	15.3	21.3	18.7	18.7	14.3
Def.	Def.	none	8	19.3	15.8	21.3	15.5	15.8	15.0
Def.	Def.	S > W	4	18.8	17.5	24.3	19.5	17.5	15.8
Def.	Def.	W > S	2	15.0	10.5	21.0	18.0	12.0	17.0
Def.	Inf.	none	3	19.0	17.7	24.3	19.0	18.3	19.3
Def.	Inf.	S > W	3	18.3	16.3	19.3	16.3	15.3	14.7
Def.	Inf.	W > S	6	19.2	17.2	23.3	17.7	18.0	16.8
Inf.	Acc.	none	4	17.8	15.8	21.5	17.8	15.8	15.8
Inf.	Acc.	S > W	2	18.0	14.0	12.5	17.0	16.0	12.5
Inf.	Acc.	W > S	2	9.5	10.0	10.5	9.5	12.5	11.0
Inf.	Def.	none	4	9.3	11.8	18.8	9.8	9.5	12.8
Inf.	Def.	S > W	4	15.3	13.8	18.0	15.5	16.0	11.8
Inf.	Def.	W > S	6	18.2	15.5	23.2	16.8	14.8	17.0
Inf.	Inf.	none	0	----	----	----	----	-----	----
Inf.	Inf.	S > W	2	15.5	17.0	20.5	18.0	18.0	17.5
Inf.	Inf.	W > S	2	12.5	15.0	18.0	12.0	11.09	13.0

5 item scale

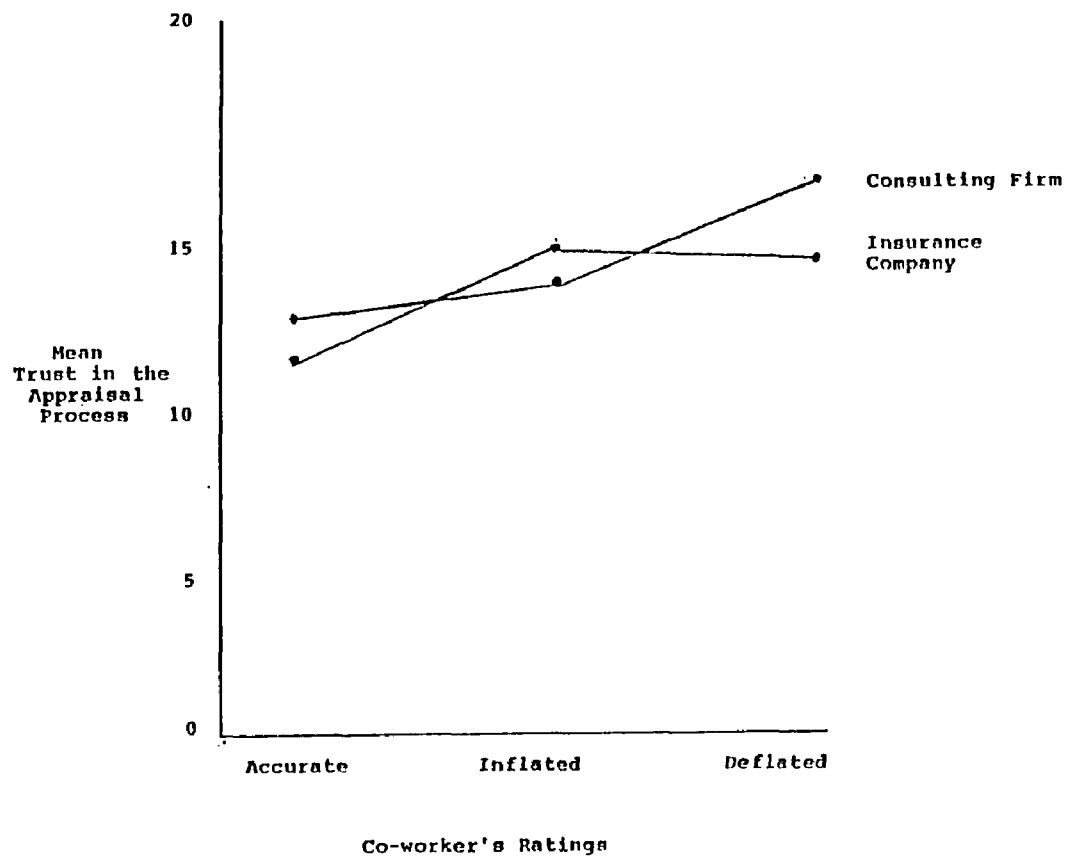


Figure 5. Graphic representation of the interaction between organization and co-worker's ratings on trust in the appraisal process.



Summary. There were three significant two-way interactions and six significant three-way interactions. Due to the small cell sample size for the three-way interactions, these interactions were not meaningful. The need for this issue to be addressed by future research will be addressed in the discussion of the results.

#### One Way ANOVAS

Because of the severe violation of the homogeneity of variance assumption for the  $F$  tests in this study and because the hypotheses were concerned primarily with main effects, one-way ANOVAS were conducted to verify the conclusions of Study 1. These analyses indicated essentially the same conclusions as the 3x3x3 ANOVAS. There was a significant effect for subject rating on desire to respond to feedback ( $F = 11.18, p < .0001$ ) (H2); acceptance of rating ( $F = 37.05, p < .0001$ ) (H3); and trust in the rater ( $F = 10.36, p < .0001$ ), trust in the organization ( $F = 14.80, p < .0001$ ), and trust in the appraisal process ( $F = 11.66, p < .0001$ ) (H4).

As in the initial analyses there was no main effect for rating inconsistency on desire to respond

to feedback ( $F = .36$ , n.s.) nor on acceptance of rating ( $F = 2.63$ , n.s.) (H5; H5a). Inconsistency also did not affect trust in the rater ( $F = 12.11$ , n.s.) or trust in the appraisal process ( $F = 1.83$ , n.s.) (H6; H6a).

Co-workers' ratings significantly affected desire to respond to feedback ( $F = 5.33$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (H7; H7a). As with the initial analyses, co-workers' ratings significantly affected trust in the organization ( $F = 6.84$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and trust in the appraisal process ( $F = 5.33$ ,  $p < .01$ ) but not trust in the rater ( $F = .88$ , n.s.) (H8). Finally, there was a main effect for co-workers' ratings on perceived appraisal system value ( $F = 5.87$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

## Study 2

### Method

#### Subjects

The subjects for Study 2 were 95 employees in a large midwestern insurance company and 45 employees from a large northeastern financial institution. Subjects were selected for inclusion on the basis of 1) having been recipients of annual or semi-annual

formal performance reviews and 2) that they would continue to receive performance evaluations.

Surveys were randomly distributed to 135 professional level (e.g., managers, district managers, agents) employees of the insurance company by a contact person. Of these, 95 were completed, yielding a response rate of 70.4%. The subsample from the insurance company consisted of 88 males and 7 females. Furthermore, 3% were between the ages of 20 and 29, 33% were between the ages of 30 and 39, 32% were between the ages of 40 and 49, and 32% were over the age of 50. Of these subjects, 18.6% had been employed in their present job for less than 5 years, 28.9% for between 5 and 10 years, and 52.6% for over 10 years.

Surveys were distributed to 80 professional level employees (e.g., vice presidents, loan officers, branch managers) in a large northeastern financial institution by a contact person. Of these, 45 were returned yielding a response rate of 56.3%. The financial institution subsample consisted of 24 males and 21 females. Furthermore, 38% were between the ages of 20 and 29, 31% were between the ages of 30 and 39, 24% were between the ages of 40 and 49, and less

than 1% were over the age of 50. Of these subjects, 60% had been employed at their present jobs for less than 5 years, 20% for between 5 and 10 years, and 20% for over 10 years.

Therefore, the entire sample consisted of 112 males and 28 females. Furthermore, 14% were between the ages of 20 and 29, 35% were between the ages of 30 and 39, 31% were between the ages of 40 and 49, and 23% were over the age of 50. Of these, 31% had been employed at their present job for less than 5 years, 27% for between 5 and 10 years, and 42% for over 10 years.

#### Procedure

A contact person in the insurance company randomly distributed packets of materials to the subjects (one per subject). This packet contained a cover letter (Appendix E) which explained the study to the participants and assured confidentiality and a list of possible political uses of performance appraisal (Appendix F). Also included in the packet was a questionnaire (Appendix G) assessing perceptions of politics in performance appraisal in the organization, attitudes toward performance appraisal, and desire to

respond to appraisal feedback. Subjects were instructed to mail the questionnaire directly to the researcher to insure confidentiality.

### Instruments

Due to the lack of any suitable available existing measures of variables in this study, all variables were measured by a 49-item tailor-made survey instrument (Appendix G). All responses, except for demographic items, were measured by a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree). Descriptions of variables and sample items appear below.

Inflation of Ratings. The extent to which ratings are inflated (ratings higher than true performance) was assessed by a four-item scale. Items (e.g., "Due to organizational politics, performance ratings in my organization can sometimes be higher than employees deserve") were developed by the present author, based on research by Longenecker et al. (1989). Additional items were modified for inclusion from the Trust in the Appraisal Process Survey (TAPS; Bernardin, 1978). Coefficient alpha was .82.

Deflation of Ratings. The extent to which ratings are deflated (ratings lower than true performance) was assessed by a four-item scale. Items (e.g., "Due to organizational politics, performance ratings in my organization are sometimes lower than employees deserve") were developed based on research by Longenecker et al. (1989) and modified items from the TAPS (Bernardin, 1978; Bernardin, Orban, & Carlyle, 1981). Coefficient alpha was .87.

Politics in Appraisal System. Politics in the appraisal system was measured by a four-item instrument. Items (e.g., "Performance appraisal in my organization is influenced by politics to a great extent") for this subscale were designed to be congruent with results on politics in appraisal by Longenecker et al. (1987). Coefficient alpha was .89.

Equity Perceptions of Ratings. The extent to which subjects perceive their ratings to be equitable compared to their co-workers was measured by four items (e.g., "My performance is evaluated as fairly as the performance of my co-workers"). This scale used some items which were adapted from scales on ratee attitudes toward performance appraisal by Platz (1985)

and by Bernardin et al. (1981). Coefficient alpha was .88.

Consistency of Feedback. The extent to which performance appraisals are consistent with verbal feedback from supervisors was measured by a four-item scale. Items (e.g., "Verbal feedback from my supervisor corresponds to my written performance evaluation") for this scale were developed to be congruent with research findings by Longenecker (1989) which indicated that politics in appraisal can precipitate inconsistency between written and spoken feedback. Coefficient alpha was .83.

Acceptance of Feedback. The extent to which subjects accept their ratings as accurate indicators of their performance was measured by five items (e.g., "Based on what I contribute to my organization, I am accurately appraised"). This scale uses some items adapted from the TAPS scale on ratee perceptions of the appraisal process by Bernardin et al. (1981). Additional items were adapted for use from scales on ratee attitudes to performance feedback by Landy et

al. (1978) and Dipboye and de Pontbriand (1981).  
Coefficient alpha was .84.

Trust in the Organization. Subjects' trust in their organization was assessed by four items (e.g., "I trust my organization to act in my best interest"). Items were written to be similar to those addressing trust in the organization from various scales of job involvement, organizational commitment, and organizational climate which appear in Cook, Hepworth, Wall, and Warr (1981). Coefficient alpha was .88.

Trust in the Appraisal Process. Subjects' trust in their organization's appraisal process was measured by four items (e.g., "The performance appraisal process in my organization can be trusted"). Items were adapted for inclusion from a measure of fairness by Folger and Konovsky (1989). Additional items tapping trust in the appraisal process were included which were similar to those from various items tapping job involvement, organizational commitment, and organizational climate which appear in Cook et al. (1981). Coefficient alpha was .89.



Trust in the Rater. Subjects' trust in their supervisor was measured by four items (e.g., "I trust my supervisor"). Some items for this scale were adapted for inclusion from a measure of fairness by Folger and Konovsky (1989). Additional items were included which were written to be congruent with those tapping rater trust from various sub-scales of job involvement measures which appear in Cook et al. (1981). Coefficient alpha was .92.

Desire to Respond to Appraisal Feedback. Subjects' desire to respond to appraisal feedback was measured using a scale designed in part from items on various job involvement scales dealing with desire to respond to feedback and appearing in Cook et al. (1981). Additional items were adapted from a scale on ratee intentions to improve performance by Platz (1985). Subjects' agreement with each of the four items (e.g., "My performance appraisal makes me feel motivated to perform effectively") was measured by a five-point Likert-type scale. Coefficient alpha was .85.

Value of the Appraisal System. Subjects' perceptions of the value of their organization's

performance appraisal system were measured by a four items (e.g., "The performance appraisal system in my organization is a worthwhile use of resources"). Some items from a measure of employee reactions to appraisal systems by Dipboye and de Pontbriand (1981) were adapted for inclusion. Additional items were written to be similar to items addressing performance appraisal value from various scales dealing with job involvement, organizational commitment, and organizational climate which appear in Cook et al. (1981). Coefficient alpha was .81.

Demographics. Subjects' sex, age, years of employment, and years of employment at their present job were measured by four items. These items were placed at the end of the survey due to research by Roberson and Sundstrom (1990) which suggested that subjects may be more likely to complete and return questionnaires when demographic items appear at the end of the instrument.

### Analysis

Correlational analysis was utilized in testing the hypotheses of Study 2 concerning employee attitudes and desire to respond to feedback.

## Results

### Subgroup Analyses

Two-group tests of mean differences (2-tailed  $t$ ) were conducted to determine if subjects differed in their responses depending on their organization. Results of these tests (see Table 10) indicated that there were no significant mean differences between groups on any political variables measured in this study. Therefore, all subjects were analyzed as one sample for the purposes of hypothesis testing.

As previously discussed, Study 2 measured 11 variables related to perceptions of and reactions to political use of performance appraisal. Table 11 presents descriptive statistics and variable intercorrelations. The correlation matrix contains the information necessary to address the hypotheses.

Perception of politics in appraisal. Hypothesis 1 predicted that perceived use of politics in the appraisal process would be negatively associated with perceived appraisal system value. Analyses indicated a significant negative relationship between perceived use of politics in appraisal and perceived appraisal

Table 10  
Intercorrelations among variables

Variable	N	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
1. Polit.	139	11.1	3.8	.82										
2. Inflated	138	14.9	3.3	.45*	.87									
3. Deflated	139	13.5	3.9	.63*	.32*	.89								
4. Inequity	140	13.1	3.3	.67*	.37*	.66*	.88							
5. Inconsis.	125	14.1	3.6	.38*	.40*	.76*	.57*	.83						
6. Accept.	140	11.2	4.1	-.54*	-.23*	-.77*	-.65*	-.71*	.84					
7. Trust(O)	140	11.0	4.1	-.53*	-.26*	-.44*	-.54*	-.43*	.44*	.88				
8. Trust(R)	140	10.4	4.7	-.55*	-.21*	-.59*	-.58*	-.62*	.68*	.49*	.92			
9. Trust(P)	140	11.8	3.8	-.67*	-.30*	-.61*	-.71*	-.62*	.65*	.76*	.65*	.89		
10. Des. Res.	140	10.6	3.8	-.44*	-.24*	-.50*	-.56*	-.67*	.68*	.50*	.60*	.68*	.85	
11. App. Val.	140	11.3	3.6	-.40*	-.23*	-.45*	-.48*	-.57*	.60*	.50*	.53*	.69*	.77*	.81

\*  $p < .05$

Coefficient alpha values for the measures are located on the diagonal.

Variable names:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Perception of politics in rating process | 7. Trust in organization                    |
| 2. Perception of inflation in ratings       | 8. Trust in appraisal process               |
| 3. Perception of deflation in ratings       | 9. Trust in rater                           |
| 4. Perception of inequity in ratings        | 10. Desire to respond to appraisal feedback |
| 5. Perception of inconsistency in ratings   | 11. Perceived value of appraisal process    |
| 6. Acceptance of rating                     |   |

Table 11  
Comparison of group means (Insurance Company versus Financial Institution)  
for political variables

Variable	FINANCIAL INSTITUTION			INSURANCE COMPANY			t	p<
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
1. Polit.	95	10.82	3.99	45	11.64	3.41	1.13	n.s.
2. Inflated	95	14.80	3.38	43	15.23	3.29	.69	n.s.
3. Deflated	95	13.14	3.82	44	14.18	3.93	1.57	n.s.
4. Inequity	95	13.28	3.61	45	12.80	2.59	.67	n.s.
5. Inconsis.	85	13.82	3.69	40	14.58	3.40	1.12	n.s.
6. Accept.	95	11.13	3.98	45	11.40	4.31	.38	n.s.
7. Trust(O)	95	10.75	4.49	45	11.51	3.14	1.09	n.s.
8. Trust(R)	95	10.35	5.19	45	10.59	3.66	.31	n.s.
9. Trust(P)	95	11.67	4.62	45	12.00	3.08	.41	n.s.
10. Des. Res.	95	10.87	3.94	45	9.98	3.55	1.22	n.s.
11. App. Val.	95	11.66	3.80	45	10.58	2.97	1.69	n.s.

Variable names:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Perception of politics in rating process | 7. Trust in organization                    |
| 2. Perception of inflation in ratings       | 8. Trust in appraisal process               |
| 3. Perception of deflation in ratings       | 9. Trust in rater                           |
| 4. Perception of inequity in ratings        | 10. Desire to respond to appraisal feedback |
| 5. Perception of inconsistency in ratings   | 11. Perceived value of appraisal process    |
| 6. Acceptance of rating                     |   |

system value ( $r = -.40$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 1.

Perception of inflation of ratings. Hypothesis 2 predicted that perceived politically motivated inflation of ratings would not be associated with desire to respond to feedback. Analyses indicated a significant negative relationship between perceived inflation of ratings and desire to respond to feedback ( $r = -.236$ ,  $p < .05$ ), failing to support Hypothesis 2.

Perception of deflation of ratings. Hypothesis 3 predicted that perceived politically motivated deflation of ratings would be negatively associated with rating acceptance. Analyses indicated a significant negative relationship between perceived deflation and acceptance of rating ( $r = -.77$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that perceived politically motivated deflation of ratings would be negatively associated with trust in the rater, trust in the organization, and trust in the appraisal process. Analyses indicated significant negative relationships between perceived deflation and: Trust in the rater

( $r = -.59$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), trust in the organization ( $r = -.44$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), and trust in appraisal process ( $r = -.61$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 4.

Perception of inconsistency in ratings.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that perceived politically motivated inconsistency between written and spoken appraisal would be negatively associated with rating acceptance and desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Analyses indicated significant negative relationships between perceived inconsistency and both rating acceptance ( $r = -.71$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and desire to respond to appraisal feedback ( $r = -.67$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 5.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that perceived politically motivated inconsistency between written and spoken appraisal would be negatively associated with trust in the rater and trust in the appraisal process. Analyses indicated significant negative relationships between perceived inconsistency and both, trust in the rater ( $r = -.62$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), and trust in the appraisal process ( $r = -.62$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 6.

Perception of inequity in ratings. Hypothesis 7 predicted that perceived inequity in ratings would be negatively associated with desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Analyses indicated a significant negative relationship between perceived inequity and desire to respond to feedback ( $r = -.56$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 7.

Hypothesis 8 predicted that perceived inequity in ratings would be negatively associated with trust in the rater, trust in the appraisal process, and trust in the organization. Analyses indicated significant negative relationships between perceived inequity and trust in the rater ( $r = -.58$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), trust in the appraisal process ( $r = -.71$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), and trust in the organization ( $r = -.54$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 8.

Hypothesis 9 predicted that perceived inequity in rating would be negatively associated with perceived appraisal system value. Analyses indicated a significant negative relationship between these variables ( $r = -.48$ ,  $p < .001$ ), thereby supporting Hypothesis 9.



### Summary

In summary, the analyses provided support for Hypotheses 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. In general, perceptions of politics in appraisal and politically motivated use of appraisals (inflation, deflation, inequity in rating, inconsistent ratings) were associated with negative employee attitudes and lower acceptance of, and desire to respond to, appraisal feedback. No support was found for Hypothesis 2. Subjects' perceptions of rating inflation were negatively associated with rating acceptance.

### Exploratory Analyses

After testing the hypotheses proposed in the present study, additional relationships among the variables were investigated.

### Political Variables

As shown in Table 11, the variables measuring perceptions of politics, inflation, deflation, inequity, and inconsistency in appraisal all were significantly and positively related to each other. Significant non-hypothesized correlations between these variables and employee attitudes and acceptance

of, and desire to respond to, feedback are presented in the following sections.

Politics in appraisal. Perceptions of politics in appraisal were also significantly negatively associated with rating acceptance ( $r = -.54$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), trust in the organization ( $r = -.53$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), trust in the rater ( $r = -.55$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), trust in the appraisal process ( $r = -.67$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), and desire to respond to appraisal feedback ( $r = -.44$ ,  $p < .0001$ ).

Inflation of ratings. Perceptions of inflation of ratings were also significantly negatively associated with rating acceptance ( $r = -.23$ ,  $p < .05$ ), trust in the organization ( $r = -.26$ ,  $p < .05$ ), trust in the rater ( $r = -.21$ ,  $p < .05$ ), trust in the appraisal process ( $r = -.30$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), and perceived appraisal system value ( $r = -.23$ ,  $p < .0001$ ).

Deflation of ratings. Perceived deflation of ratings was also significantly negatively associated with desire to respond to feedback ( $r = -.59$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and perceived appraisal system value ( $r = -.45$ ,  $p < .0001$ ).

Inequity in ratings. Inequity perceptions were also significantly negatively associated with rating acceptance ( $r = -.65$ ,  $p < .0001$ ).

Inconsistency in ratings. Perceptions of inconsistency were also significantly negatively associated with trust in the organization ( $r = -.43$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and perceived appraisal system value ( $r = -.57$ ,  $p < .0001$ ).

#### Additional Analyses

Regression procedures were used to investigate the relationships between the variables identified in the tentative model of politics in performance appraisal (see Figure 2). Based on this model, the variables inflation, deflation and inconsistency of ratings were combined to yield a measure of personal experience with politics. A measure of psychological processes was developed by combining the variables perceived equity, acceptance of rating, and trust (in the rater, the organization, and the appraisal process). While the high intercorrelations between variables allowed for these combinations (see Table 11), it is acknowledged that this is but one of several combinations that could be justified empirically.

Results of analyses using the aforementioned combined variables indicated that perception of politics in appraisal significantly predicted perceived value of appraisal system ( $B = .42$ ,  $r^2 = .154$ ,  $t = -5.11$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and desire to respond to appraisal feedback ( $B = -.44$ ,  $r^2 = .189$ ,  $t = -5.75$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Figure 6 presents the model of politics in performance appraisal with regression coefficients added.

However, perception of politics was a stronger predictor of psychological process variables (see Figure 6). Perception of politics significantly predicted psychological process variables ( $b = -.713$ ,  $r^2 = .505$ ,  $t = -11.92$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Additionally, psychological process variables significantly predicted perceived appraisal system value ( $b = .67$ ,  $r^2 = .443$ ,  $t = 10.57$ ,  $p < .0001$ ).

Perception of politics predicted 47% of the variance in personal experience with politics ( $B = .69$ ,  $r^2 = .466$ ,  $t = 10.32$ ,  $p \leq .0001$ ). Personal experience with politics and general perception of politics together predicted 61% of the variance in psychological process variables ( $R^2 = .609$ ,  $p < .0001$ ).

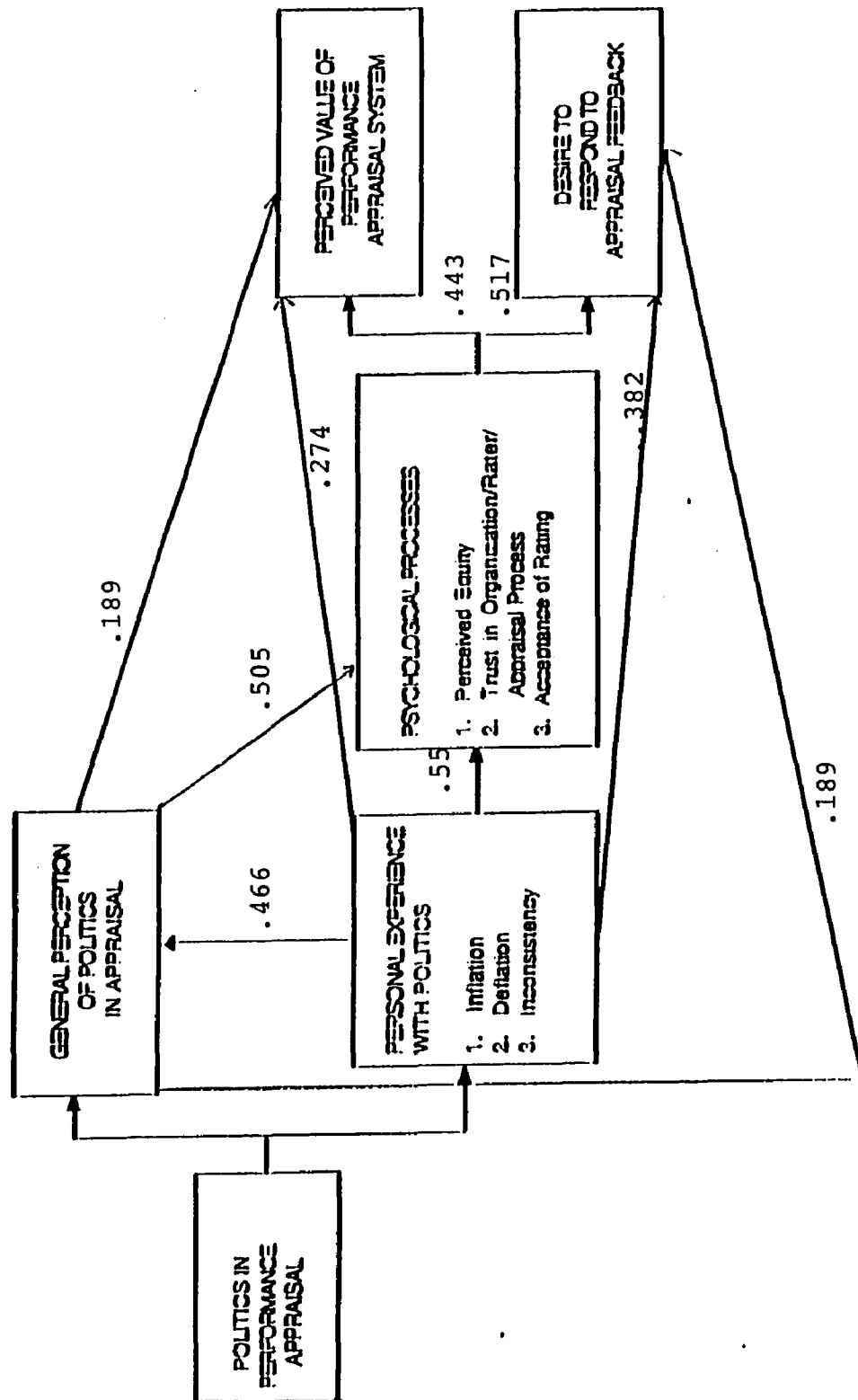


Figure 6. Tentative model of the effects of politics in performance appraisal with regression coefficients added.

Perception of politics, personal experience with politics, and psychological processes predicted 49% of the variance in perceived appraisal value ( $R^2 = .492$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). However, psychological processes was the only significant predictor when entered first in the equation ( $B = .744$ ,  $t = 7.13$ ,  $p \leq .0001$ ). These variables predicted 54% of the variance in desire to respond to appraisal feedback ( $R^2 = .535$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Stepwise regression analyses indicated that combined psychological processes was the strongest predictor ( $B = .63$ ,  $t = 6.32$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), however, personal experience with politics also was a significant predictor ( $B = -.29$ ,  $t = -3.07$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Perception of politics was not a significant predictor in this equation.

While the purpose of this study was not model testing, the tentative model (Figure 6), with regression coefficients added, helps to illustrate the findings of this study. It can be seen that psychological processes strongly predict both perceived appraisal system value and desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Psychological processes are,

in turn, strongly predicted by general perceptions of politics and personal experience with politics. However, the analyses do not allow directional or causal inferences to be made from these results.

#### Summary

In summary, hypothesized and non-hypothesized results indicated several major themes. First, variables measuring perceptions of politics in appraisal were all positively associated with each other. Second, variables measuring employee attitudes and acceptance/desire to respond to feedback (hypothesized "reactions" to politics) were all positively associated with each other. Further, all of the political variables were negatively associated with each attitude and acceptance/desire to respond variable. Finally, regression analyses indicated that combined psychological processes was the strongest predictor of perceived appraisal system value and desire to respond to appraisal feedback.

## Discussion

This section will discuss results of the present research. An overview of the findings regarding the hypothesized relationships between politics in performance appraisal and ratee attitudes, acceptance of rating, and desire to respond to appraisal feedback will first be presented. A discussion of additional exploratory analyses will follow. Next, limitations of the present research and theoretical and applied implications will be discussed. Finally, some directions for future research in the area will be presented.

### Results of Analyses of Hypothesized Relationships

Hypothesis 1, which predicted that politics in the appraisal process would be positively associated with perceived value of the appraisal system, was supported by the results of Study 2. This result is consistent with research on source credibility (Ilgen et al., 1979; Earley, 1986) which suggests that source credibility is an important determinant of ratee reactions to performance feedback.

Results of analyses in both Study 1 and Study 2 failed to support Hypothesis 2 which proposed that



there would be no relationship between inflation of ratings and ratee desire to respond to appraisal feedback. This was hypothesized due to prior research which suggested that positive feedback would be readily accepted (Ilgen et al., 1979) and studies which suggested that ratees have a high tolerance for positive inequity (Greenberg, 1983). Together, these bodies of research led to the inference that inflated ratings would suggest that there is no need for improved performance. Analyses in both studies indicated that there was a significant negative relationship between rating inflation and desire to respond to feedback. Research by Longenecker et al. (1987) suggested that raters may inflate ratings to influence ratee behavior (e.g., motivate ratees) and attitudes. The results of the present research, while not supporting Hypothesis 2, suggest that raters' inflation of performance appraisals may not have the intended positive effects on ratees. Further, the effect of inflation may be actually to de-motivate ratees. It is possible that subjects in feedback and equity research did not know that they were receiving positive/inequitable feedback. Subjects in the

present research were asked explicitly if they received inflated ratings. This issue is discussed further as a limitation of the present research.

Analyses from both Study 1 and Study 2 supported Hypothesis 3 which predicted that ratings deflated for political reasons would be negatively associated with rating acceptance. These results are consistent with research on feedback sign (Landy & Farr, 1983) and suggest that negative feedback is less accepted than positive feedback. Additionally, these results are consistent with equity theory tenets (Carrell & Dittrich, 1978) that posit that individuals have very low tolerance of negative inequity (inputs greater than outcomes).

Hypothesis 4 proposed that politically motivated deflation of ratings would be negatively associated with trust in the rater, trust in the organization, and trust in the appraisal process. This hypothesis was supported by both Study 1 (vignettes) and Study 2 (survey). These results are generally consistent with research on feedback message (Ilgen et al., 1979) and suggest that deflated ratings are associated with negative employee reactions to feedback. Further, it

is consistent with research by Pearce and Porter (1986) which suggested that negative feedback is associated with negative employee attitudes.

Hypothesis 5 proposed that politically motivated inconsistency between written and spoken performance appraisal would be negatively associated with rating acceptance and ratee desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Results of Study 1 indicated that inconsistency was negatively associated with rating acceptance but not with desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Analyses in Study 2 supported Hypothesis 5 for both acceptance of rating and desire to respond to appraisal feedback. The relationship between inconsistency in verbal versus written appraisal is consistent with prior research (Stone & Stone, 1985), and suggests that feedback consistency is an important component of feedback acceptance. Significant results in Study 2 for desire to respond to feedback give some support to the contentions of Longenecker and Gioia (1988) that inconsistency between written and spoken feedback is associated with negative outcomes.

Hypothesis 5a attempted to test the specific form of inconsistency between written and verbal performance appraisal. It was hypothesized that ratees whose verbal feedback was more positive than their written appraisal would have lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback versus ratees whose written feedback was more positive than their verbal feedback. There was no support for this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that inconsistency in appraisal feedback would be negatively associated with trust in the rater and trust in the appraisal process. This hypothesis was not supported by results from Study 1. However, results from Study 2 supported this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6a (tested only in Study 1), predicted that subjects receiving verbal feedback which was more positive than their written feedback would have lower trust in the rater and lower trust in the appraisal process. There was no support for this hypothesis.

Taken together, the results of tests of hypotheses 5 and 6 give some support to anecdotal evidence reported by Longenecker and Gioia (1988) that inconsistency between verbal and written appraisal

feedback is associated with negative ratee attitudes and outcomes.

Hypothesis 7 predicted that inequity in appraisals would be negatively associated with ratee desire to respond to appraisal feedback. This hypothesis was supported by the results of Study 2. Ratees who perceived that inequity existed in the appraisal process had lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback. The results of Study 2 analyses were consistent with equity theory predictions (Adams, 1965) that felt inequity may lead to reduced motivation.

Hypothesis 7a attempted to test a specific form of inequity in appraisal. It was hypothesized that ratees who received accurate or deflated ratings would have lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback when their co-workers received inflated ratings. There was no support for this hypothesis, which was tested only in Study 1.

Hypothesis 8, which predicted that inequity in performance appraisal would be negatively associated with trust in the rater, trust in the appraisal process, and trust in the organization, was partially

supported by the results from Study 1. Inequity was negatively associated with trust in the appraisal process; however, there was no effect of inequity on trust in the rater. Further, trust in the organization was lower only when subjects' co-workers received inflated ratings. Hypothesis 8 was fully supported for trust in the rater, organization, and appraisal process by the results from Study 2.

Hypothesis 9 predicted that inequity in performance appraisal would be negatively associated with perceived value of the appraisal system. This hypothesis was partially supported by the results of Study 1. Perceived value of the appraisal system was greater in subjects whose co-workers received inflated or deflated ratings (versus subjects whose co-workers received accurate ratings). Additional analyses from Study 2 also found a non-hypothesized negative relationship between perceived inequity and perceived value of the appraisal system. The significant results from Study 1 and Study 2 are consistent with equity theory (e.g, Adams, 1965; Greenberg, 1982; Lane & Messe', 1972) and suggest that felt inequity is associated with negative attitudes in ratees.

### Exploratory Analyses

Study 1. Additional analyses from Study 1 indicated that acceptance of rating and trust in the rater were significantly affected by the interaction between subject ratings and inconsistency in ratings. As mentioned previously, the small cell sizes (see Table 8) made the nature of the interactions difficult to interpret. However, the graphs of these interactions suggest that consistent ratings are not associated with rating acceptance and trust in the rater when ratings are deflated.

Study 2. Additional correlational analyses indicated three major results (see Table 11). First, political appraisal variables were all significantly positively correlated with each other. Second, all reaction variables (trust, acceptance, desire to respond) were all significantly positively correlated with each other. Finally, all political appraisal variables were significantly negatively correlated with each reaction variable in this study.

These results suggest that there is a strong association between different aspects of politics in appraisal and employee reaction variables. The

results of the exploratory analyses give further support to the thesis that political use of appraisal is associated with negative outcomes.

#### Integrative Overview Study 1/Study 2

Results of analyses of Study 1 and Study 2 followed essentially the same pattern. Perceived political use of performance appraisals was strongly associated with negative outcomes in both studies. Correlational analyses in Study 2 were consistent with ANOVA results in Study 1. This suggests that political perception variables may lead to ratee outcomes rather than vice-versa (see Figure 5). While the results of correlational and regression analyses (Study 2) do not allow for causal or directional statements to be made, the research design of Study 1 suggests a possible causal link.

In the two cases where results of Studies 1 and 2 were not consistent (H5, H7), the hypotheses were supported by the field survey and not the political manipulation vignette study. In these cases, however, mean differences in the Study 1 sample were in the predicted directions. While this cannot be interpreted as any kind of support for the unsupported



hypotheses, it does suggest that the opposite relationships did not exist in this sample.

A fifth limitation was the overrepresentation of males in the study and the elimination of lower level employees. The generalizability of the study is therefore limited to males in higher level jobs. The implications of this for future research are addressed in the final section of the discussion.

Finally, the lack of association between organization studied (with the exception of one variable in Study 1) and outcome measures, suggests, at least in the present samples, subjects' organization does not moderate perceptions of and reaction to political variables. This result is consistent with the thesis that reaction to politics is an individual rather than an organizational variable.

#### Limitations/Alternative Explanations of Results

Several limitations of the present research should be noted. First, the present study used only self-report questionnaires to measure all dependent variables. Previous research has shown that using a single type of measurement strategy may bias observed

results (Williams, Cote, & Buckley, 1989). It is possible that the nature of the instruments or wording of the items could have biased the results. Related to this, the vignette manipulation and self-report measures of inflation/deflation of ratings may have over-stated the phenomenon (e.g., ratees in organizations may not know when they have received inflated/deflated ratings).

The second limitation involves the vignette manipulations in Study 1. Although actual ratees in two organizations were used for this study, the results were based on reactions to hypothetical ratings and situations. As performance appraisal is a significant event for ratees, it may be the case that ratees would have reacted differently if they had actually received the ratings in the organizational conditions described. However, this limitation is probably minor due to the observed consistency between studies.

A third limitation involves the tailor-made instruments used to measure the variables. Although all measures demonstrated acceptable reliability, there was a high degree of intercorrelation among

variables. It is possible that the variables were contaminated and do not have a high degree of discriminant validity.

A fourth limitation concerns the analysis of the Study 2 results. Although the research design of Study 1 allows the suggestion of causal relationships, the only study to assess existing organizational politics, Study 2, was analyzed by correlational techniques. Correlational analysis only demonstrates degree of association between variables and does not allow for causal or directional statements to be made regarding the obtained relationships. However, the overlap and consistency between Studies 1 and 2 serves to limit the impact of this limitation to a certain extent.

A final limitation concerns the small, uneven cell sizes for testing interactions in Study 1. Although significant three-way interactions resulted, the small cell sizes renders these results interpretable. As the present study hypothesize only main effects, future research should be conducted with even cell sizes of sufficient size for finding and interpreting interactions among political appraisal variables.

### Applications

The results of the present study have implications for both theory and application in performance appraisal. Longenecker et al. (1987) demonstrated that raters may, rather than striving for accuracy, use performance appraisal as a political tool to influence outcomes and ratee behavior. The present study was an attempt to discover the effects of these political biases in performance appraisal on ratee attitudes, acceptance of feedback, and desire to respond to feedback. Results of the present research suggest that political use of appraisal (e.g., inflation, deflation, inconsistency, inequity) is associated with several negative outcomes including lower trust, lower feedback acceptance, lower belief in value of appraisal process, and lower desire to respond to appraisal feedback.

With regard to applied significance, the present study identified several negative outcomes that were associated with political bias in appraisal. Raters who bias ratings, using the performance appraisal as a political tool, should realize that political use of appraisal and political bias in appraisal may lead to

lower trust in them as raters and lower trust in the organization and the appraisal process. The present research suggests that raters should use the appraisal process as a means to communicate perceived employee performance in an unbiased manner. Raters should attempt to avoid the perception of inequitable or biased ratings in order to minimize employee distrust and negative attitudes toward the appraisal process.

Inconsistency between written and spoken feedback was associated with negative attitudes and reduced desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Raters need to realize that inconsistency, and political use of appraisals in general, may be detrimental to organizational functioning. Written and verbal ratings should be as consistent with each other as possible. All attempts should be made to avoid allowing political conditions (e.g., scarcity of funds, personal agendas) to artificially inflate or deflate written or verbal feedback.

The present study suggests the need for the development of rater training programs which incorporate the effects of political bias in appraisal and teach methods of reducing/managing politics in

appraisal (see Longenecker & Gioia, 1988). The present study suggests that these programs should include a summary of the negative impact of distorted or biased ratings. Additionally, potential biases in ratings and methods for dealing with these should be covered. While rater training programs cannot assure unbiased ratings or employee acceptance of ratings, they can illustrate the importance of limiting political use of appraisal. Politics most likely cannot be totally eliminated. However, its detrimental impact can be minimized through these types of programs.

The theoretical significance of this research is two-fold. First, the present research extended the body of research on rater motivation (Zedeck & Cascio, 1991) and politics in appraisal (Longenecker et al., 1987) by studying the effects of political bias on ratees. Secondly, the present research used both feedback process research (Ilgen et al., 1979) and equity theory findings (Greenberg, 1983) to develop hypotheses regarding the effects of political bias. This previous research, along with results of the present study, can be used as a first step in

developing a model of the effects of politics in performance appraisal. Regression analyses (see Figure 5) suggest that this tentative model is a possible representation of how politics operates in performance appraisal. It should be noted, however, that, due to high variable intercorrelations and the limitations of correlational techniques, other representations of the results may be better models of politics in appraisal.

Finally, this research, along with research by Longenecker et al. (1987), is a step toward narrowing the research-practice gap identified by Banks and Murphy (1985) and putting to rest the implicit assumption that accuracy is the primary goal of raters completing performance appraisal documents in organizations.

#### Future Research

While the present study provides some support for the negative effects of political bias in appraisal, several aspects of the area remain in need of further study. First, the effects of political bias need to be replicated and extended in other samples. Related to this, research identifying the pervasiveness of

politics and the degree of politics in organizations would be beneficial in understanding the phenomenon and developing programs and interventions to control and manage politics. This research would have significant implications for performance appraisal practitioners.

Secondly, testing of a model which incorporates politics and the use of performance appraisal as a tool could be undertaken (see Figure 5). The collection of data over time and the use of techniques (e.g., LISREL) which would allow causal inferences to be drawn would further research in this area. Additionally, the relationship of politics to variables not tested (e.g., motivation, performance, organization commitment, turnover) should be included in future models.

Third, future researchers should refine and develop measures of politics and measures of the effects of politics in performance appraisal. The high intercorrelations among variables in the present study suggest that better measures may need to be developed and/or variables need to be reconceptualized.



Fourth, future research should further investigate possible interactive effects of political variables in appraisal. The present study was not able to adequately interpret interactions due to small cell sizes.

Fifth, the present research did not address the issue of politically motivated lack of appraisal. This has been suggested as a major area of concern, especially for executives (Longenecker & Gioia, 1988). Future research should address this potentially important issue.

Finally, results of the effects of politically motivated inconsistency were mixed in the present study. Future research should investigate how inconsistency between written and verbal feedback impacts ratees.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, past research has shown that raters use performance appraisals as political tools in attempts to achieve personal and organizational goals (Longenecker et al., 1987). The present research suggests that politically motivated distortions of ratings impact ratees in several negative ways.

Politics in appraisal is related to lower trust, acceptance of feedback, belief in appraisal system value and desire to respond to appraisal feedback. Further, the results suggest that any intended benefits of political use of appraisal may be outweighed by the negative impact on ratees. Therefore, findings from the present study suggest that raters need to be aware of the effects of political use of appraisal and strive to give honest, accurate feedback. Research in the area of rater training programs which acknowledge politics in appraisal will help in this regard, and further reduce the research-practice gap in performance appraisal.

## References

- Adams, J.S. (1965). Inequity in social exchange. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), Advances in experimental social psychology (Vol 2, pp. 267-299). New York: Academic Press.
- Ashford, S.J. (1986). Feedback-seeking in individual adaptation: A resource perspective. Academy of Management Journal, 29, 465-487.
- Ashford, S.J., & Cummings, L.L. (1983). Feedback as an individual resource: Personal strategies of creating information. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 32, 370-398.
- Banks, C.G., & Murphy, K.R. (1985). Toward narrowing the research-practice gap in performance appraisal. Personnel Psychology, 38, 335-345.
- Bannister, B.D. (1986). Performance outcome feedback and attributional feedback: Interactive effects on recipient responses. Journal of Applied Psychology, 71, 203-210.
- Becker, T.E., & Klimoski, R.J. (1989). A field study of the relationship between the organizational feedback environment and performance. Personnel Psychology, 42, 343-358.
- Bernardin, H.J. (1978). The development and use of the trust in the appraisal process survey (TAPS). Unpublished manuscript.
- Bernardin, H.J., & Beatty, R.W. (1984). Performance appraisal: Assessing human behavior at work. Boston: Kent.
- Bernardin, H.J., Orban, J.A., & Carlyle, J.J. (1981). Performance rating as a function of trust in appraisal and rater individual differences. Proceedings of the Academy of Management, 311-315.

- Bernardin, H.J., & Orban, J.A. (1984). Leniency effect as a function of rating format, purpose for appraisal and rater individual differences. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management.
- Bernardin, H.J., & Villanova, P. (1986). Performance appraisal. In E. Locke (Ed.), Generalizing from laboratory to field settings. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath.
- Campbell, J.P., Dunnette, M.D., Lawler, E.E., & Weick, K.E. (1970). Managerial behavior, performance, and effectiveness. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Cardy, R.L., & Dobbins, G.H. (1986). Affect and appraisal accuracy: Liking as an integral dimension in evaluating performance. Journal of Applied Psychology, 71, 672-678.
- Carrell, M.R., & Dittrich, J.E. (1978). Equity theory: the recent literature, methodological considerations and new directions. Academy of Management Review, 3, 202-210.
- Carroll, S.J., & Schneier, C.E. (1982). Performance appraisal and review systems: The identification, measurement, and development of performance in organizations. Glenview, IL: Scott-Forseman.
- Cleveland, J.N., Murphy, & K.R., Williams, R.E. (1989). Multiple uses of performance appraisal: Prevalance and correlates. Journal of Applied Psychology, 74, 130-135.
- Coleman, L., Jussim, L., & Abraham, J. (1987). Students' reactions to teachers' evaluations: The unique impact of negative feedback. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 17, 1051-1070.
- Cook, J.D., Hepworth, S.J., Wall, T.D., & Warr, P.B. (1981). The experience of work. London: Academic Press.

- Dipboye, R.L., & de Pontbriand, R. (1981). Correlates of employee reactions to performance appraisals and appraisal systems. Journal of Applied Psychology, 66, 248-251.
- Earley, P.C. (1986). Trust, perceived importance of praise and criticism, and work performance: An examination of feedback in the United States and England. Journal of Management, 12, 457-453.
- Feldman, J. (1981). Beyond attribution theory: Cognitive processes in performance evaluation. Journal of Applied Psychology, 66, 127-148.
- Fisher, C. D. (1989). Current and recurrent challenges in HRM. Journal of Management, 15, 157-180.
- Florin-Thuma, B.C., & Boudreau, J.W. (1987). Performance feedback utility in a small organization: Effects on organizational outcomes and managerial decision processes. Personnel Psychology, 40, 693-713.
- Folger, R., & Konovsky, M.A. (1989). Effects of procedural and distributive justice on reactions to pay raise decisions. Academy of Management Journal, 32, 115-130.
- Ford, J.K., MacCallum, R.C., & Tait, M. (1986). The application of exploratory factor analysis in applied psychology: A critical review and analysis. Personnel Psychology, 39, 291-314.
- Greenberg, J. (1982). Approaching equity and avoiding inequity in groups and organizations. In J. Greenberg & R.L. Cohen (Eds.), Equity and justice in social behavior (pp. 389-435). New York: Academic Press.
- Greenberg, J. (1986). Determinants of perceived fairness of performance evaluations. Journal of Applied Psychology, 71, 340-342.

- Greenhaus, J.H., Seidel, C., & Marinis, M. (1983). The impact of expectations and values on job attitudes. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 31, 394-417.
- Guzzo, R.A., Jette, R.D., & Katzell, R.A. (1985). The effects of psychologically based intervention programs on worker productivity: A meta-analysis. Personnel Psychology, 38, 275-291.
- Heneman, R.L. (1988). The relationship between supervisory ratings and results-oriented measures of performance: A meta-analysis. Personnel Psychology, 39, 811-826.
- Ilgen, D.R., Fisher, C.D., & Taylor, M.S. (1979). Consequences of individual feedback on behavior in organizations. Journal of Applied Psychology, 64, 349-371.
- Ilgen, D.R., & Favero, J.L. (1985). Limits in generalization from psychological research to performance appraisal processes. Academy of Management Review, 10, 311-321.
- Ilgen, &, Moore, C.F. (1987). Types and choices of performance feedback. Journal of Applied Psychology, 72, 401-406.
- Kanuk, L. & Berenson, C. (1975). Mail Surveys and response rates: A literature review. Journal of Marketing Research, 12, 440-453.
- Kirk, R.E. (1982) Experimental design: Procedures for the behavioral sciences, (2 ed.). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Kopelman, R.E. (1986). Objective feedback. In E.A. Locke (Ed.) Generalizing from laboratory to field settings (pp. 119-145). Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

- Landy, F.J., Barnes-Farrell, J., & Cleveland, J.N. (1980). Perceived fairness and accuracy of performance evaluation: A follow-up. Journal of Applied Psychology, 65, 355-356.
- Landy, F.J., Barnes, J.L., & Murphy, K.R. (1978). Correlates of perceived fairness and accuracy of performance evaluation. Journal of Applied Psychology, 63, 751-754.
- Landy, F.J., & Farr, J.L., & Jacobs, R.H. (1982). Utility concepts in performance measurement. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 30, 15-40.
- Landy, F.J., & Farr, J.L. (1983). The measurement of work performance. New York: Academic Press.
- Lane, I.M., & Messe', L.A. (1972). Distribution of insufficient, sufficient, and oversufficient rewards: A clarification of equity theory. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 21, 228-233.
- Larson, J.R. (1986). Supervisors' performance feedback to subordinates: The impact of subordinate performance valence and outcome dependence. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 37, 391-408.
- Larson, J.R. (1989). The dynamic interplay between employees' feedback seeking strategies and supervisors' delivery of performance feedback. Academy of Management Review, 14, 408-422.
- Latham, G.P., & Wexley, K.N. (1981). Increasing performance through performance appraisal. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Latham, G.P., & Yukl, G.A. (1975). A review of research on the application of goal setting in organizations. Academy of Management Journal, 18, 824-845.

- Levine, E.L. (1980). Introductory remarks for the symposium "Organizational applications of self-appraisal and self-assessment: Another look." Personnel Psychology, 33, 259-262.
- Locher, A.H., & Teel, K.S. (1983). Appraisal trends. Personnel Journal, September, 139-145.
- Locke, E.A. (1968). Toward a theory of task motives and incentives. Organization Behavior and Human Performance, 3, 157-189.
- Locke, E.A., Shaw, K.N., Saari, L.M., & Latham, G.P. (1981). Goal setting and task performance, 1969-1980. Psychological Bulletin, 90, 125-152.
- Longenecker, C.O. (1991) The political dimensions of executive performance evaluations. Paper presented at the sixth annual meeting of the Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology: St. Louis.
- Longenecker, C.O. (1989). Truth or consequences: Politics and performance appraisal. Business Horizons, 32, 1-7.
- Longenecker, C.O., & Gioia, D.A. (1988). Neglected at the top: Executives talk about executive appraisal. Sloan Management Review, Winter, 41-47.
- Longenecker, C.O., Liverpool, P.R., & Wilson, K.A. (1988). An assessment of managerial/subordinate perceptions of performance appraisal effectiveness. Journal of Business and Psychology, 2, 311-320.
- Longenecker, C.O., & Ludwig, D. (1990). Ethical dilemmas in performance appraisal revisited. Journal of Business Ethics.
- Longenecker, C.O., Sims, H.P., & Gioia, D.A. (1987). Behind the mask: The politics of performance appraisal. Academy of Management Executive, 1, 183-193.



- McCarty, P.A. (1986). Effects of feedback on the self-confidence of men and women. Academy of Management Review, 29, 840-847.
- McEvoy, G.M., & Buller, P.F. (1987). User acceptance of peer appraisals in an industrial setting. Personnel Psychology, 40, 785-797.
- McIntyre, R.M., Smith, D.E., & Hassett, C.E. (1984). Accuracy of performance ratings as affected by rater training and perceived purpose of rating. Journal of Applied Psychology, 69, 147-156.
- Mohrmann, A., & Lawler, E. (1983). Motivation and performance appraisal behavior. In F. Landy (Ed.), Performance measurement: Directions for the future. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Mohrmann, A.M., Resnick-West, S.M., & Lawler, E.E. (1989). Designing Performance Appraisal Systems: Aligning Appraisals and Organizational Realities. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mount, M.K. (1984). Psychometric properties of subordinate ratings of managerial performance. Personnel Psychology, 37, 687-702.
- Murphy, K.R., Balzer, W., Kellam, K., & Armstrong, J.G. (1983). Purpose of rating and accuracy in observing behavior and evaluating performance. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Anaheim, CA.
- Ott, L., Larson, R.F., & Mendenhall, M. (1983). Statistics: A tool for the Social Sciences (3 ed.). Boston: Duxbury.
- Pearce, J.L., & Porter, L.W. (1986). Employee responses to formal appraisal feedback. Journal of Applied Psychology, 71, 211-218.

- Platz, S.J. (1985). Organizational characteristics affecting ratee perceptions of the appraisal process and ratee intentions to change. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation: Louisiana State University.
- Podsakoff, P.M., & Farh, J.L. (1989). Effects of feedback sign and credibility on goal setting and task performance. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 44, 45-67.
- Roberson, M.T., & Sundstrom, E. (1990). Questionnaire design, return rates, and response favorableness in an employee attitude questionnaire. Journal of Applied Psychology, 75, 354-357.
- Russell, J.S., & Goode, D.L. (1988). An analysis of managers' reactions to their own performance feedback. Journal of Applied Psychology, 73, 63-67.
- Smith, D.E. (1986). Training programs for performance appraisal: A review. Academy of Management Review, 11, 22-40.
- Stone, D.L., & Stone, E.F. (1985). The effects of feedback consistency and feedback favorability on self-perceived task competence and perceived feedback accuracy. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 36, 167-185.
- Sulsky, L.M., & Balzer, W.K. (1988). Meaning and measurement of performance rating accuracy: Some methodological and theoretical concerns. Journal of Applied Psychology, 73, 497-506.
- Tziner, A., & Latham, G.P. (1989). The effects of appraisal instrument, feedback and goal-setting on worker satisfaction and commitment. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 10, 145-153.

- Williams, K.J., DeNisi, A.S., Blencoe, A.G., & Cafferty, T.P. (1985). The role of appraisal purpose in information acquisition and utilization. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 35, 314-339.
- Williams, L.J., Cote, J.A., Buckley, M.R. (1989) Lack of method variance in self-reported affect and perceptions at work: Reality or artifact? Journal of Applied Psychology, 74, 3, 462-468.
- Zedeck, S., & Cascio, W.F., (1982). Performance appraisal decisions as a function of rater training and purpose of appraisal. Journal of Applied Psychology, 67, 752-758.

**Appendix A**  
**Cover Letter: Study 1**

Dear Participant,

I am conducting research relevant to the Ph.D. degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology at Louisiana State University. I am conducting this research to learn more about how certain organizational conditions surrounding performance appraisal would affect your opinions concerning its use. Due to the fact that I cannot create the actual conditions I wish to research in an organizational setting, I need your help. I have written a description of a hypothetical performance appraisal and the organizational conditions surrounding it. I would like for you to assume that you received this appraisal given the described conditions. Please read the description carefully, and respond to the attached questionnaire as you would if you had actually received the rating in the situation described.

After completing the survey, please place the entire packet in the stamped pre-addressed envelope provided. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary.

Your responses to all questions are completely confidential. None of the completed questionnaires will be seen by anyone except the researchers here at Louisiana State University. Please do not sign your name to your questionnaire. Sign only the consent form at the bottom. Additionally, the results of this study will be reported so that no individual person can be identified.

Your interest and cooperation are greatly appreciated. Your responses will contribute significantly to the success of this research. If you have any questions about this research entitled "Performance Appraisal Questionnaire", feel free to contact me through the Department of Psychology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803 or phone (504) 388-8745 (o) or (504) 767-7651 (h). Thank you once again!

Sincerely,

*Alfred C. Schnur, Jr.*

Alfred C. Schnur, Jr., M.A.

*Alfred C. Schnur, Jr.*

Louisiana State University requires that their participation is voluntary, and that they sign a consent form.

PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

I have read the above statements regarding my participation in this research study and understand them. I hereby agree to participate in this study.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**  
**Instructions for Vignette Manipulation**

---

**PERFORMANCE REVIEW EXERCISE**

---

Please assume that you are employed by an organization in the same position that you currently hold. Please also assume that in this organization you receive an annual written performance review which is sent to the Personnel Department. This review is used by the Personnel Department to determine your salary increase/decrease for the upcoming year. The written performance review is the major variable used in determining employee compensation.

The performance review is conducted by your immediate supervisor during your annual performance review meeting. During this meeting, your supervisor presents your written performance review (which will be sent to the personnel department) and gives you verbal feedback regarding your performance. The performance review has several rating categories, however the one which is most important due to its impact on salary is the OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING, which is rated on the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

On the following page is a description of "your" performance review. Along with this description is a brief discussion of the conditions in the organization that may have had an effect on your performance rating. Please assume that you received this rating given the organizational environment described. In addition, your objective performance level (e.g., your "true performance") is indicated.

Following this description, you will be asked to give your reactions to the review and answer several other questions. Please remember that your responses will be confidential and seen by no one other than the researchers here at LSU. Thank you again for your time and cooperation.

**Appendix C**  
**Vignettes Describing Organizational Conditions**



**#1: Inflated, others deflated, positive discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Your supervisor also verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Objectively, your performance was "Above Average" (5).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Outstanding" (7) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to avoid conflict with you and get a maximum merit increase for you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated lower than their actual performance, so that they would receive minimum merit increases.

**Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Objectively, Your Performance was:** "Above Average" (5);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Lower than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#2: Inflated, others deflated, negative discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Below Average" (3).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to avoid conflict with you and get a maximum merit increase for you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated lower than their actual performance, so that they would receive minimum merit increases.

**Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Objectively, Your Performance was:** "Below Average" (3);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Lower than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

### #3: Inflated, others deflated, no discrepancy

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Your supervisor also verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Above Average" (5).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Outstanding" (7) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to avoid conflict with you and get a maximum merit increase for you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated lower than their actual performance, so that they would receive minimum merit increases.

#### Summary

##### **Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

##### **Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Above Average" (5);

##### **Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Lower than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#4: Inflated, others inflated, positive discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Objectively, your performance was "Above Average" (5).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Outstanding" (7) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to avoid conflict with you and get a maximum merit increase for you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated higher than their actual performance, due to their supervisors wishing to avoid conflict with them and so that they would receive maximum merit increases.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Above Average" (5);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Higher than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#5: Inflated, others inflated, negative discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Below Average" (3).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to avoid conflict with you and get a maximum merit increase for you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated higher than their actual performance, so that they would receive maximum merit increases.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Below Average" (3);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Higher than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#6: Inflated, others inflated, no discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Your supervisor also verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Above Average" (5).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Outstanding" (7) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to avoid conflict with you and get a maximum merit increase for you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated higher than their actual performance, so that they would receive maximum merit increases.

**SUMMARY****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Above Average" (5);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Higher than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#7: Inflated, others accurate, positive discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Objectively, your performance was "Above Average" (5).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Outstanding" (7) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to avoid conflict with you and get a maximum merit increase for you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were given ratings equal to their actual performance.

**Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Objectively, Your Performance was:** "Above Average" (5);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Equal to their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

#8: Inflated, others accurate, negative discrepancy

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Below Average" (3).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to avoid conflict with you and get a maximum merit increase for you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were given ratings equal to their actual performance.

#### **Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Objectively, Your Performance was:** "Below Average" (3);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Equal to their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.



**#9: Inflated, others accurate, no discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Your supervisor also verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Above Average" (5).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Outstanding" (7) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to avoid conflict with you and get a maximum merit increase for you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were given ratings equal to their actual performance.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Above Average" (5);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Equal to their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#10: Deflated, others deflated, positive discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). However, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Below Average" (3). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to motivate you, and because an "Outstanding" (7) rating would have led to a greater merit increase which would have strained his budget. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated lower than their actual performance due to organizational pressure to minimize merit increases.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Below Average" (3);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Outstanding" (7);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Lower than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

#11: Deflated, others deflated, negative discrepancy

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to motivate you, and because an "Outstanding" (7) rating would have led to a greater merit increase which would have strained his budget. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated lower than their actual performance due to organizational pressure to minimize merit increases.

#### **Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Objectively, Your Performance was:** "Outstanding" (7);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Lower than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#12: Deflated, others deflated, no discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Your supervisor also verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to motivate you, and because an "Outstanding" (7) rating would have led to a greater merit increase which would have strained his budget. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated lower than their actual performance due to organizational pressure to minimize merit increases.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Outstanding" (7);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Lower than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#13: Deflated, others inflated, positive discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Below Average" (3). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to motivate you, and because an "Outstanding" (7) rating would have led to a greater merit increase which would have strained his budget. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated higher than their actual performance in order to minimize conflict and supervisors' personal feelings for the employees.

**Summary**

Your Written  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Verbal Feedback  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Below Average" (3);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Outstanding" (7);

Your Co-Workers'  
Performance was rated: Higher than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#14: Deflated, others inflated, negative discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to motivate you, and because an "Outstanding" (7) rating would have led to a greater merit increase which would have strained his budget. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated higher than their actual performance in order to minimize conflict and supervisors' personal feelings for the employees.

**Summary**

Your Written  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Verbal Feedback  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Outstanding" (7);

Your Co-Workers'  
Performance was rated: Higher than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

#15: Deflated, others inflated, no discrepancy

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Your supervisor also verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to motivate you, and because an "Outstanding" (7) rating would have led to a greater merit increase which would have strained his budget. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated higher than their actual performance in order to minimize conflict and supervisors' personal feelings for the employees.

#### **Summary**

##### **Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

##### **Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Outstanding" (7);

##### **Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Higher than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#16: Deflated, others accurate, positive discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Below Average" (3). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to motivate you, and because an "Outstanding" (7) rating would have led to a greater merit increase which would have strained his budget. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department received ratings equal to their actual performance.

**Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Below Average" (3);

**Objectively, Your Performance was:** "Outstanding" (7);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Equal to their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.



**#17: Deflated, others accurate, negative discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to motivate you, and because an "Outstanding" (7) rating would have led to a greater merit increase which would have strained his budget. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department received ratings equal to their actual performance.

**Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Objectively, Your Performance was:** "Outstanding" (7);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Equal to their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

#18: Deflated, others accurate, no discrepancy

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Your supervisor also verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that you received "Above Average" (5) on your written performance review, in part, because your supervisor wished to motivate you, and because an "Outstanding" (7) rating would have led to a greater merit increase which would have strained his budget. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department received ratings equal to their actual performance.

#### **Summary**

Your Written  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Verbal Feedback  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Outstanding" (7);

Your Co-Workers'  
Performance was rated: Equal to their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#19: Accurate, others deflated, positive discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that your supervisor told you that you were "Above Average" (5), in part, to motivate you to perform even better in the future. Your written performance review was accurate so that you would get a maximum merit increase. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated lower than their actual performance, so that they would receive minimum merit increases thus responding to organizational pressures to minimize merit increases.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Outstanding" (7);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Lower than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#20: Accurate, others deflated, negative discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Above Average" (5).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that your supervisor told you that you were "Outstanding" (7), in part, to motivate you and because he wished to avoid conflict with you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated lower than their actual performance, so that they would receive minimum merit increases thus responding to organizational pressures to minimize merit increases.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Above Average" (5);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Lower than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#21: Accurate, others deflated, no discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Good" (6). Your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Good" (6). Objectively, your performance was "Good" (6).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests, however you received an accurate rating. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated lower than their actual performance so that they would receive minimum merit increases, thus responding to organizational pressures to minimize merit increases.

#### **Summary**

**Your Written  
Performance Review indicated: "Good" (6);**

**Verbal Feedback  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Good" (6);**

**Objectively, Your Performance was: "Good" (6);**

**Your Co-Workers'  
Performance was rated: Lower than their actual performance.**

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#22: Accurate, others inflated, positive discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that your supervisor told you that you were "Above Average" (5), in part, to motivate you to perform even better in the future. Your written performance review was accurate so that you would get a maximum merit increase. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated higher than their actual performance. You suspect this was so these employees would receive maximum merit increases thereby avoiding conflict and confrontation.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Outstanding" (7);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Higher than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#23: Accurate, others inflated, negative discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Above Average" (5).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that your supervisor told you that you were "Outstanding" (7) in order to motivate you, and to avoid conflict with you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated higher than their actual performance. You suspect this was so these employees would receive maximum merit increases thereby avoiding conflict and confrontation.

**Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Objectively, Your Performance was:** "Above Average" (5);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Higher than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#24: Accurate, others inflated, no discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Good" (6). Your supervisor also verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Good" (6). Objectively, your performance was "Good" (6).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests, however you received an accurate rating. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department were rated higher than their actual performance. You suspect this was so these employees would receive maximum merit increases thereby avoiding conflict and confrontation.

**Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Good" (6);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Good" (6);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Good" (6);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Higher than their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.



**#25: Accurate, others accurate, positive discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5). Objectively, your performance was "Outstanding" (7).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that your supervisor told you that you were "Above Average" (5), in part, to motivate you to perform even better in the future. Your written performance review was accurate so that you would get a maximum merit increase. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department received ratings equal to their actual performance.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Above Average" (5);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Outstanding" (7);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Equal to their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#26: Accurate, others accurate, negative discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Above Average" (5), however, your supervisor verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Outstanding" (7). Objectively, your performance was "Above Average" (5).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests. You suspect that your supervisor told you that you were "Outstanding" (7) to motivate you and to avoid conflict with you. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department received ratings equal to their actual performance.

**Summary**

**Your Written**  
Performance Review indicated: "Above Average" (5);

**Verbal Feedback**  
from your Supervisor indicated: "Outstanding" (7);

**Objectively, Your Performance was:** "Above Average" (5);

**Your Co-Workers'**  
Performance was rated: Equal to their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**#27: Accurate, others accurate, no discrepancy**

As previously mentioned, in "your" organization you annually receive a written performance review which is completed by your immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Personnel Department. Although the evaluation form that is used by "your" organization has several points of evaluation, one rating is of most importance to you, your co-workers, and the organization alike: the **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**. Overall performance is rated on a 7 point scale ranging from "Unacceptable" (1) to "Outstanding" (7). The scale appears below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding

This rating is used to determine the amount of pay increase that you will receive and in determining promotion. This is of major importance to you, due to the fact that each additional rating point corresponds to a significant percentage of salary increase.

You have just come from your annual performance review meeting with your supervisor. During this meeting, your supervisor showed you your written performance review. This review, which was sent to the personnel department, indicated that your overall performance was "Good" (6). Your supervisor also verbally indicated that your overall performance was "Good" (6). Objectively, your performance was "Good" (6).

You realize that your organization is highly political and people tend to protect their own interests, however, you received an accurate rating. Additionally, you are aware that other employees in your department received ratings equal to their actual performance.

**Summary****Your Written**

Performance Review indicated: "Good" (6);

**Verbal Feedback**

from your Supervisor indicated: "Good" (6);

Objectively, Your Performance was: "Good" (6);

**Your Co-Workers'**

Performance was rated: Equal to their actual performance.

Keeping in mind the rating you received and the circumstances surrounding, please complete the questionnaire which begins on the following page.

**Appendix D**  
**Questionnaire: Study 1**

Please respond to the following statements based on the feedback you received and the other information in the preceding description. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements. Please use the following scale in responding to each statement.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Please write the number corresponding to your extent of agreement in the blank to the left of each statement.

#### Acceptance of Rating

- \_\_\_ 1. I am satisfied that this appraisal accurately reflects my performance.
- \_\_\_ 2. I accept this appraisal as accurate.
- \_\_\_ 3. This appraisal is biased and does not reflect my true performance.
- \_\_\_ 4. Based on my performance, I was accurately evaluated.

#### Trust in Organization

- \_\_\_ 5. I find it difficult to believe that this organization looks out for its employees.
- \_\_\_ 6. I trust this organization to act in my best interest.
- \_\_\_ 7. It appears that this organization tries to be honest in dealing with its employees.
- \_\_\_ 8. In general, this organization can be trusted.

#### Trust in Appraisal Process

- \_\_\_ 9. I believe that the appraisal process in this organization leads to appropriate promotions.
- \_\_\_ 10. This performance appraisal process is ethical in dealing with employees.
- \_\_\_ 11. I feel that the performance appraisal process in this organization yields appropriate results.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. The performance appraisal process in this organization can be trusted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I believe that the performance appraisal system in this organization generally yields appropriate appraisals.

**Trust in Supervisor**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. The supervisor who gave me this rating was honest and ethical in dealing with me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. The supervisor who gave me this rating allowed personal biases or motives to influence my appraisal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I feel confident that the supervisor who gave me this rating will always try to treat me fairly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I trust the supervisor who gave me this rating.

**Desire to Respond to Feedback**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. This appraisal motivates me to perform my job more effectively.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. This appraisal will help me to set goals to improve my performance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. This appraisal makes me not want to expend any extra effort in performing my job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. The appraisal I received makes me feel like working harder at my job.

**Value of Appraisal System**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. The performance appraisal system in this organization is a worthwhile endeavor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. The performance appraisal system in this organization helps employees perform more effectively.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. The performance appraisal system in this organization is primarily an inconvenience to supervisors and subordinates alike.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. The performance appraisal system in this organization is of great value to all employees.

**Manipulation Checks**

- \_\_\_ 26. My written performance rating in this exercise was inflated (e.g., it indicated that my performance was better than it actually was).
- \_\_\_ 27. My written performance rating in this exercise was deflated (e.g., it indicated that my performance was worse than it actually was).
- \_\_\_ 28. My written performance rating in this exercise was accurate (e.g., it reflected my actual performance).
- \_\_\_ 29. My written appraisal was more positive than verbal feedback from my supervisor.
- \_\_\_ 30. My written appraisal was more negative than verbal feedback from my supervisor.
- \_\_\_ 31. My written appraisal was the same as verbal feedback from my supervisor.

**Demographics**

32. My age is \_\_\_\_ years.
33. My sex is (circle one) male female
34. I have been employed at my present job for \_\_\_\_ years.
35. I have been employed full-time for \_\_\_\_ years.

**Appendix E**  
**Cover Letter: Study 2**



Dear Participant,

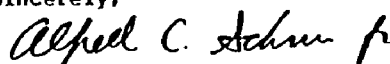
I am conducting research relevant to the Ph.D. degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology at Louisiana State University. I am conducting this research to learn more about organizational conditions surrounding performance appraisal and your opinions concerning its use. This research is intended to add to our knowledge of how appraisal affects you. Because this is the case, the results should allow us to make suggestions on how to best conduct performance appraisal in organizations to maximize its benefit to employees and management alike.

For this research to be successful, I need your help. Please consider all that you know about 1) the way your own performance is evaluated, 2) the way that the performance of other employees is evaluated, and 3) the way in which performance appraisal is handled in your organization. With this in mind, please complete the survey which follows on the next page. After completing the survey, please place the entire packet in the stamped pre-addressed envelope provided.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your responses to all questions are completely confidential. None of the completed questionnaires will be seen by anyone except the researchers here at Louisiana State University. Please do not sign your name to your questionnaire. Sign only the consent form at the bottom. Additionally, the results of this study will be reported so that no individual person can be identified.

Your interest and cooperation are greatly appreciated. Your responses will contribute significantly to the success of this research. If you have any questions about this research entitled "Performance Appraisal Survey", feel free to contact me through the Department of Psychology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803 or phone (504) 388-8745 (o) or (504) 767-7651 (h). Thank you once again!

Sincerely,



Alfred C. Schnur, Jr., M.A.

Louisiana State University requires that all subjects are told that their participation is voluntary, and that they sign a consent form. PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

I have read the above statements regarding my participation in this research study and understand them. I hereby agree to participate in this study.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix F**  
**Description of Political use of Performance Appraisal**

I am interested in your opinions regarding performance appraisal in your organization. It has been suggested that performance ratings in organizations are sometimes distorted (inflated/deflated) for political reasons. Political distortion of ratings is defined as "ratings which are inflated or deflated so as not to accurately reflect employee performance for political reasons". Some political reasons for distortions are listed below:

- \*\* Supervisors wish to avoid conflict with subordinates.
- \*\* Supervisors wish to increase employee motivation.
- \*\* Supervisors fond of subordinates.
- \*\* Supervisors wish to increase employee pay raises.
- \*\* Supervisors wish to make themselves or their departments look good.
- \*\* Supervisors wish to create documentation for firing employees.
- \*\* Supervisors respond to organizational pressures to minimize pay raises by deflating appraisals.

In the following survey, please use the preceding definition of political bias and list of reasons for it, when responding to the questions.

**Appendix G**  
**Questionnaire: Study 2**

To better understand performance appraisal I would like you to complete the following survey. Based on your own experience in your organization, please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements. Please use the following scale in responding to each statement.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Please write the number corresponding to your extent of agreement in the blank to the left of each statement.

#### Inflation of Ratings

- \_\_\_ 1. Due to organizational politics, my performance appraisal is sometimes higher than my performance warrants.
- \_\_\_ 2. Politics in my organization causes my performance appraisals to sometimes indicate that I am performing at a higher level than I actually am (e.g., inflated ratings).
- \_\_\_ 3. My performance appraisals are sometimes more positive than is warranted by my actual performance because of organizational politics.
- \_\_\_ 4. In certain cases, due to organizational politics, I receive higher performance ratings than my actual performance indicates.

#### Deflation of Ratings

- \_\_\_ 5. Due to organizational politics, my performance ratings are sometimes lower than I deserve.
- \_\_\_ 6. My performance ratings are sometimes deflated due to organizational politics (ratings lower than my actual performance).
- \_\_\_ 7. My performance appraisals are sometimes more negative because of organizational politics than is warranted by my actual performance.
- \_\_\_ 8. Organizational politics sometimes causes my performance appraisals to be more negative than is indicated by my actual performance.

#### Perception of Politics in the Appraisal Process

- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Performance appraisal in my organization is influenced by politics to a great extent.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Performance appraisals in my organization are usually free from political distortions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Supervisors in my organization use employee performance appraisal as a tool to achieve political goals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Biased performance appraisals due to politics are rare in my organization.

#### Perceptions of Equity in Appraisal

- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. My performance is evaluated as fairly as the performance of my co-workers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Other employees receive higher performance ratings than they deserve.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I receive performance ratings equivalent to others performing as well as myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. My supervisor evaluates me using the same standards as he/she does with other employees.

#### Correspondence Between Written and Spoken Appraisal

If you do not receive verbal feedback from your supervisor in a formal/informal performance appraisal interview, please skip questions 17 through 20.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Verbal feedback in my appraisal interview corresponds to my written performance evaluation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Due to organizational politics, my written performance evaluation is sometimes more positive or negative than verbal feedback from my supervisor during the appraisal interview.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. In my appraisal interview, due to organizational politics, verbal feedback from my supervisor is sometimes less positive or negative than my written performance evaluation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Due to organizational politics, my written performance evaluation sometimes differs from verbal feedback I receive from my supervisor in my appraisal interview.

**Acceptance of Rating**

- \_\_\_ 21. I usually accept my performance ratings as accurate.
- \_\_\_ 22. I am satisfied that my most recent appraisal was accurate.
- \_\_\_ 23. In general, my appraisals are biased and do not reflect my true performance.
- \_\_\_ 24. Based on what I contribute to my organization, I am accurately appraised.
- \_\_\_ 25. I understand why I was evaluated as I was on my last appraisal.

**Trust in Organization**

- \_\_\_ 26. Often, I find it difficult to believe that my organization looks out for its employees.
- \_\_\_ 27. I trust my organization to act in my best interest.
- \_\_\_ 28. Most of the time, my organization tries to be honest in dealing with its employees.
- \_\_\_ 29. In general, my organization can be trusted.

**Trust in Appraisal Process**

- \_\_\_ 30. I trust that the appraisal process in my organization can be trusted to handle promotions honestly.
- \_\_\_ 31. The performance appraisal system can be trusted to use consistent standards in evaluating employees
- \_\_\_ 32. The performance appraisal system in my organization can be trusted.
- \_\_\_ 33. I believe that the performance appraisal system in my organization can be trusted to produce appropriate ratings.

**Trust in Supervisor**

- \_\_\_ 34. My supervisor can be trusted.
- \_\_\_ 35. At times, my supervisor allows personal motives or biases to influence his/her decisions.
- \_\_\_ 36. I feel confident that my supervisor will always try to act in my best interest.

\_\_\_\_\_ 37. I trust my supervisor.

**Desire to Respond to Feedback**

\_\_\_\_\_ 38. My performance appraisal makes me feel motivated to perform effectively.

\_\_\_\_\_ 39. I use my performance appraisal to set goals to improve my performance.

\_\_\_\_\_ 40. My performance appraisals usually do not make me wish to expend any extra effort in performing my job.

\_\_\_\_\_ 41. My performance appraisals usually motivate me to perform my job.

**Value of Appraisal System**

\_\_\_\_\_ 42. The performance appraisal system in my organization is a worthwhile use of resources.

\_\_\_\_\_ 43. The performance appraisal system in my organization helps employees with day-to-day relations with supervisors.

\_\_\_\_\_ 44. The performance appraisal system in my organization is primarily an inconvenience to supervisors and subordinates alike.

\_\_\_\_\_ 45. The performance appraisal system in my organization helps employees with recognizing their strengths and improving on their weaknesses.

**Demographics**

46. My age is \_\_\_\_\_ years.

47. My sex is (circle one) male female

48. I have been employed at my present job for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

49. I have been employed full-time for \_\_\_\_\_ years.



### Vita

The author, Al C. Schnur, Jr., was born in East Lansing, Michigan in 1964. He attended Kansas State University where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology in 1986. He received a fellowship to attend Louisiana State University where he received his Master's degree in Industrial Organizational Psychology in 1988. Mr. Schnur will receive his Ph.D. from that institution in 1992. He has given several presentations at organizational sciences conventions and has published several articles in this area. Mr. Schnur has completed two internships in the human resources field. Currently, he is employed by Psychological Consultants to Industry in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania as a consulting psychologist.

**DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT**

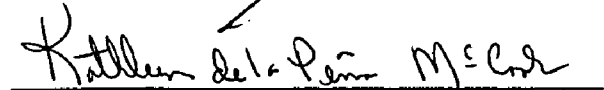
**Candidate:** Al C. Schnur

**Major Field:** Psychology

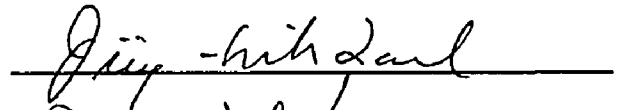
**Title of Dissertation:** The Effects of Politically Biased Performance Appraisal on Ratee Job Attitudes and Desire to Respond to Feedback

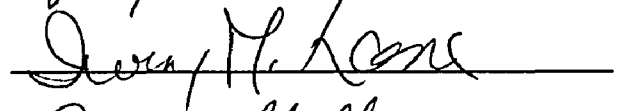
**Approved:**

  
Major Professor and Chairman

  
Dean of the Graduate School

**EXAMINING COMMITTEE:**











**Date of Examination:**

11-1-91